

PREACHER/TEACHER
A Model for Pastor-led Bible Study and
DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE PREACHING

F. Cole Fowler, DMin
BA, Southern Methodist University, 1978
MTh, Perkins School of Theology
Southern Methodist University, 1981

A final document submitted to
The Doctoral Studies Committee
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Ministry

United Theological Seminary
Dayton, Ohio
May, 1996

PREACHER/TEACHER

A Model for PASTOR-led Bible Study and DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE PREACHING

Abstract

Introduction

SECTION I "WHAT WE HAVE HERE IS FAILURE TO COMMUNICATE"

CHAPTER 1 -- A THEOLOGY OF PREACHING

- A. THE EARLY CHURCH
- B. NARRATIVE THEOLOGY AS DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE

CHAPTER 2 -- A THEOLOGY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- A. THE DECLINE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN THE LOCAL CHURCH
- B. THE ROLE OF THE PASTOR
 - 1. RESOURCE
 - 2. RECREATE
 - 3. RE-PRESENT

CHAPTER 3 -- THE SETTING

- A. THE COMMUNITY
- B. THE CHURCH

SECTION II "... WHEREFORE ART THOU?"

CHAPTER 4 -- BRINGING THE BIBLE TO LIFE

- A. THE FOCUS AND DESIGN
- B. IMPLEMENTATION
- C. ADDITIONAL APPLICATIONS

SECTION III "TO BE OR NOT TO BE, THAT IS THE QUESTION!"

CHAPTER 5 -- MAKEUP AND COSTUMING: CREATING THE ROLE

- A. RESEARCHING THE CHARACTER
- B. DESIGNING THE IMAGE
- C. ACQUIRING THE EQUIPMENT

CHAPTER 6 -- A STUDY OF SIMON PETER, "THE ROCK"

- A. SESSION 1: CALLED TO DISCIPLESHIP
- B. SESSION 2: PRIDE AND DENIAL
- C. SESSION 3: FEED MY SHEEP
- D. EVALUATION

CHAPTER 7 -- A STUDY OF JOB

- A. SESSION 1: POINTS AND COUNTERPOINTS
- B. SESSION 2: TELL ME WHY
- C. SESSION 3: POETRY AND THEOPHANY

CHAPTER 8 -- A STUDY OF AMOS

- A. BACKGROUND
- B. SESSION 1: WHO AND WHERE?
- C. SESSION 2: ORACLES, JUDGEMENTS AND VISIONS

CHAPTER 9 -- A STUDY OF PAUL

- A. SESSION 1: PAUL MEETS JESUS
- B. SESSION 2: PREACHING AND PERSECUTION
- C. SESSION 3: PAUL THE PHILOSOPHER

Appendix

Bibliography

ABSTRACT
PREACHER/TEACHER
A Model for PASTOR-LED Bible Study
AND DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE PREACHING

by

F. Cole Fowler

United Theological Seminary, 1996

The congregation of Faith United Methodist Church, Kearney, Nebraska, engaged in a model of short-term Bible study of four Biblical characters, each followed by a dramatic monologue sermon given in a Sunday worship. The Bible study and sermons were presented by the author on the persons of Amos, Job, Peter and Paul. The project presented the Gospel in a way that utilized the medium of theatrical/entertainment styles identified to be in keeping with today's society. The reactions of a randomly selected number of worship attenders present on the days of the presentations were recorded during evaluations sessions held immediately following the experience.

INTRODUCTION

SECTION I: "WHAT WE HAVE HERE IS FAILURE TO COMMUNICATE"

We of the Christian persuasion are convinced (or ought to be) that the Kerygma is truth. And yet, however vital and imperative this message is, unless it is delivered and received, its dynamic is negated. Indeed the very essence of the word Kerygma is not brought to its fullness of fruition, without adequate proclamation. For in New Testament theology, the Kerygma is not only the message but the act of proclaiming it, as well.

Thus it is our basic premise and contention that the "how" of proclaiming this Good News is of paramount importance. It is perhaps not being too severe on what passes for "pulpit communication" today, to note that its very inadequacy of proclamation, may be the contributing element to a demise in interest toward the Gospel. For certainly, if the Gospel is as vital as its professed adherents have claimed, it deserves the most exciting and efficient telling possible.

It is a tragic indictment of the pulpit ministry, when week after week the greatest Event, the most glorious news overheard and one of cosmic importance, is often couched in such dull modes of thought and shop worn cliches, that its impact is lost. And even more terribly indicating is the fact that too often, in an almost obsessional urge to be relevant, the Gospel is so thoroughly neutralized that there is no Kerygmatic encounter. The foundational premise is that preaching must be Kerygmatic and personal regardless of the size of the congregation. H. H. Farmer, in his treatise, The Servant of the Word¹, has convincingly argued that preaching is personal encounter. Thus, despite the popular attacks from critics of preaching within and without the church, preaching can and does fulfill

¹H. H. Farmer, The Servant of the Word (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942).

a need that no other expression of the Christian faith can.

Realizing that, while the core or basis of New Testament and contemporary preaching stem from the Kerygma, attention will be focused on other types of pulpit messages. If the whole gospel is proclaimed adequately, every facet of a person's life will be encountered at some point. To communicate this "whole" gospel is indeed a monumental task, but it must be effected. We who are commissioned to communicate this gospel have no other choice.

The world continues to be an audience to whom the Kerygmatic proclamation is not easily communicated or authenticated. The individual of today exists in a culture of unbelief. Paul Sherer observes this demise of belief thus: "From believing too much that never did have to be believed, they took to believing so little that for countless thousands human existence and the world itself no longer seemed to make any sense."² And not having the wherewithal to make sense of the world, humanity has not the resources to rebuild it. We have reached within ourselves and not found the substance nor the power to effect a really new structure of life. Into this world of "want" comes the Kerygmatic preacher with the word of God's initiations in restoration and recreation. The preacher speaks of the Good News and, when faith is mentioned, far too many relegate faith as believing something for which there is little or no evidence. In fact, what is ultimately in question is not the dynamic of faith but whether there is a God to begin with!

How many churches operate with the understanding that people, Christian and non-Christian alike, are going to come through their sanctuary doors,

²Paul Sherer, The Word God Sent (New York: Harper, 1965), 11.

feel pretty much at home, understand the sovereignty of God and the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, and in one morning make a complete transition from a secular world view?

Perhaps there was a time when that was a reasonable hope. Was the secular world view that disconnected from God's agenda? A person would hear the claims of Christ and say, That makes sense. I know I'm a sinner or I know I shouldn't drink so much, or I really should be faithful to my spouse.

Today, even though we are asking the same thing — a commitment to Christ — in the perception of the secular person, we're asking for far more. The implications of becoming a Christian today are not just sobering; they are staggering.³

The world of today does not place the importance on truth, integrity and honesty that it did in a day gone by. Many find the secular world requiring them to adopt a job description that is diametrically opposed to the Kerygma. They cannot be "on the level" and keep their job.⁴

We who would proclaim the Kerygma have our work cut out for us. The topics we choose, the way we present Scripture, the illustrations we use, the responses we ask for, all need to contribute to our goal of effectively presenting Christ.

In the new forms and styles of ministry emerging within the contemporary church, such as entertainment evangelism and the changes in musical styles, drama has been one which has attained much early attention and promise.⁵ And while it is not within the scope of this project to discuss all the possibilities of

³see Ted W. Engstrom, Integrity (Waco: Word Books, 1987).

⁴Bill Hybels, Speaking to the Secular Mind (Carol Stream, IL: Leadership, 1988) 28.

⁵Janet Litherland, Getting Started in Drama Ministry (Colorado Springs: Merriwether Publishing LTD., 1988) 2.

drama ministry, it is to concern one aspect, that of dramatic monologue as an effective tool for communicating the Gospel. For without entering into the literal field of religious drama, the alert minister who would communicate his/her message is in need of re-enacting a drama.

It has been suggested that people think with pictures in their heads.⁶ Educative principles inform us that visual aids are indispensable and in many instances irreplaceable.⁷ Thus the preacher must be quick to “paint” word pictures within the minds of the hearers. By seeing as well as hearing, the objective which the minister would persuade listeners to attend, is more quickly achieved. The theology of existentialism might at this point be applied to the idea of drama. For when one is able to put oneself in a similar place of existence, the “What does it mean to me?” is more clearly enunciated. And the use of drama is not limited to the re-enacting of the specific Biblical events alone, but encompasses the present as well. Life now as then, is in essence, being upon the stage. To seize upon and utilize the dynamics of our encounter with life, and our living role is an opportunity to the preacher who would communicate vital truths.

To persuade an audience is in essence the basis of any speaker’s purpose. But the Christian preacher is not just a speaker. The preacher is a herald, one who speaks of and for another. The achieving of total perfection would never be possible. To begin with, the gospel is too great to ever be adequately portrayed by human words. Yet the very glory of it, its very immensity should stimulate every herald to clothe its truth in words of beauty, regency, and elevate the listener’s values. However, these attributes alone will not suffice. This sounds

249. ⁶Frank W. Klos, Making Educational Ministry Come Alive (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978)

⁷Ibid.

almost too obvious to risk repeating, but nevertheless the fact remains that the intended content, the basic essentials of the message, could be hidden in and behind the finest eloquence.

This is not to disparage the evident power in words. Indeed a “natural” flow of words that depict the intended picture is commendable. To be truly persuasive often necessitates the projection of disciplined phrasing. Dull phrasing (even grammatically correct) serves as a communication block. In the mind of many listeners, the message could not be important if its tone and pattern is so bland and routine.⁸ But a “polished” sermon does not mean one whose glare blinds the hearer of its intended thought. Instead the really disciplined sermon is one that has a forceful simplicity. And simplicity of the most vital kind is not easy to attain if the essentials of the gospel are also maintained. The Gospel is not simple non-complex truths. But while its many facets can ever be enlarged upon, its core truths must be proclaimed to all. And the language used by the preacher must illustrate and project the message, not the particular technical learning of the preacher.

Preaching, as the true communication of God’s Word in Christ to humanity, does not begin nor end in the pulpit. There is the continual interaction of the preacher and the congregation. The preacher, in earnest communion with God, will see God not only in quiet moments of meditation, but in the tensions and concrete experiences of life which relate to the life experiences of the members of the congregation.

The preacher must speak to a life that is permeated with seemingly everything except God and the reason God gives to life. The kerygmatic Gospel is that

⁸Paul Scott Wilson, The Practice of Preaching (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993) 49.

which in its many facets, he is ordained to proclaim. And this encounter will and must occur in many "pulpits."

The preacher of the Gospel who gives all of oneself must also seek to have life give all it can in the communicating of the Gospel. From commercials to the;most common experience in life, the uncommon particular can be drawn. To see the vision in concrete items is a necessity for imaginative preaching. To see with the lens of imagination by the eye of faith might be the key, were one to sum up this technique of preaching encounter and use of its resources.

The Kerygma is the proclamation of new life. It is the answer to humanity's basic problem of estrangement from our source of being, and consequential death. In essence then, it is a live giving message. To communicate this message as the Author of life would have us, would necessitate its proclamation to be one that is its self alive. Too often this living message is blocked in its communication by a deadened vision, or a heart that does not feel the pulse of life itself. The Christian minister who is called to communicate must first seek the life giving inspiration of the creator of life, and then go within the context of life to hear and see, that we might speak the life giving word. The task of the preacher is to be the bearer of this Kerygmatic note. The entire harmony of life, here and beyond, depends on it. And it is never in discord.

CHAPTER 1: A THEOLOGY OF CHRISTIAN PREACHING

THE EARLY CHURCH

Where should one begin when considering the theology of Christian preaching? Perhaps the obvious answer is "with Christ." However, I am influenced by Dr. R. W. Dale's comment in The Atonement where he says that while Jesus "came to preach the gospel, His chief objective in coming was that there might be a gospel to preach."⁹ The preaching of Jesus, as I also found in the early Apostolic preaching, carried the theme of the kingdom of God. Christ, as evidenced in His Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:1-7:29 preached that the kingdom of God was at hand. After Pentecost, the point identified by Dodd¹⁰ and Kerr¹¹, with which I agree, the Apostles proclaimed the kingdom had come.

Much has been written in an attempt to identify and/or define the phrase, "the kingdom of God." H. T. Kerr points out in Preaching in the Early Church that many phrases were used interchangeably to refer to the theme found in the preaching of the early church. "It is evident that the preaching of the early church concentrated upon no colorful phrase such as 'the kingdom' but presented Jesus Christ, in His life, death and resurrection."¹²

One of the earliest forms of this theme, or kerygma, is found in Paul's letter to the church at Corinth: "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he has been raised on the third day according to the scriptures."¹³

⁹R. W. Dale, The Atonement (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1947) 13.

¹⁰C. H. Dodd, Apostolic Preaching (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952).

¹¹H. T. Kerr, Preaching in the Early Church (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1947).

¹²H. T. Kerr, Preaching in the Early Church (Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1947)

¹³I Corinthians 15:3-4

C. H. Dodd contends that there were two themes evident in the speeches and epistles of the apostles, kerygma and didache. He identifies Kerygma as preaching or proclaiming about God's saving act in Christ which gives hope to everyone. The other branch of this dichotomy is teaching, in the Greek language of the New Testament, didache, with the intent of expressing an ethical ideal on how one should live.¹⁴ My reading of Dodd's position leaves me with the impression that he discounts the didache. In preaching the kerygma of the crucified, resurrected and ascended Christ we are often striving to challenge the hearer to respond and that often requires instruction as to what actions or life styles would be appropriate, i.e. teaching. Preaching might stand without teaching, though the one leg being shorter would cause it to be noticeable slanted, but teaching needs the impact of the kerygma.

Given my position that Christian preaching did not begin until Pentecost, Peter's sermon as recorded in Acts 2:22-28, is the earliest recorded Christian sermon. This, as well as the other four sermons found in Acts, contains a statement of the person and work of Christ. H. T. Kerr succinctly outlines the key elements of the Apostolic preaching in Preaching in the Early Church¹⁵ in five points: (1) the preachers of the early church grounded their message in the Old Testament. They saw Christ in the fulfillment of prophetic proclamation and this was a key item in their preaching. (2) Their sermons contained an emphasis on the story of the earthly life of Christ. (3) The sacrificial death of Christ was another key element as was (4) His resurrection. (5) The final key element in the Apostolic preaching was a call to repentance.

This emphasis on the person and work of Christ as found in the sermons of Peter, Stephen, and Paul is one that I feel should not be casually considered.

¹⁴C. H. Dodd, Apostolic Preaching (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952).

¹⁵H. T. Kerr, Preaching in the Early Church (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1947).

The person of Christ is that Christ is both God and human. The divine nature of Christ is "one substance with the Father."¹⁶ Understanding Christ to be God means that Christ is revealed of God's love for humankind. The love revealed through Jesus Christ is agape - it is God's self-giving in love to humankind. Christ is the decisive revelation. There can be no meaningful existence, no meaningful living without faith in God. One can see that Christ is the continuation of the creative love of God. Christ as God continues today as revealed through the Holy Spirit.

It is this Christ Event, God giving of Himself, which becomes the crux of the Christian faith. It must be professed that Christ being God has its origin in God. The Christ Event is that which comes from God and is a manifestation of God's providential care to see His creature love continue. The Christ Event affirms the historic Jesus, who continues in the Spirit. The witness of experience, Scripture, and tradition bears witness that Jesus of Nazareth, the man, is truly God. Though there are many who have seen Christ as many persons, it remains that only in the words, Jesus is the Christ, or in the words of Peter's confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" is Christ seen as He really is, as a person. This Christ Event becomes the basis for one's faith in the living, creative love of God as revealed in Christ.

Christ as a prophet bears witness in Christ's teaching and preaching. The teachings of Christ and his preaching reflect the main thrust of the kingdom of God. This motif of Christ's teaching and preaching is best expressed by the Christ Event and Christ as the Word in our experience of preaching and worship. Truly the Kingdom of God is at hand and is to be preached as such, for the Kingdom is present in Jesus Christ.

¹⁶The Nicene Creed

This personal expansion on Kerr's five key items found in apostolic preaching is my basic theological position on Christian preaching. It is not by accident that they follow what I find to be the core of the apostles' understanding of Christ, but rather, a personal expression of agreement. I agree with Kerr in his assessment of the key elements of apostolic preaching.

An example of post apostolic preaching is a sermon written by Origen. The biography which precedes The First Homily attributes to two significant contributions to preaching on behalf of Origen: "He was the first preacher to establish the form of the sermon as a discourse on a specific biblical text, where that text should be explained and applied; and he was the first preacher to lay great stress upon the importance of careful exegesis of the historical and grammatical significance of the sermon."¹⁷ Origen was very much enthralled with the use of allegory in sermons. He perhaps best stated his opinion when he wrote, "The only sense of the canticle intended by God is the spiritual or allegorical sense."¹⁸

Regardless of why he had such a penchant for the allegorical when it came to interpretation, Origen was first a Bible scholar. Presuming that The First Homily is representative of Origen's preaching, I see him going into detail to exegete his text.

This sermon also explained to me the form of a simple homily. That being a simple commentary on the phrases within a given pericope in there given order. I question whether this exegetical approach to preaching would, or should, be accepted in today's pulpits. This seemingly analytical approach to scripture without any attempt at applications to lives or life-styles, would find little tolerance.

¹⁷Clyde Fant, editor, 20 Centuries of Great Preaching (Waco: Word Publishing, 1979) 316.

¹⁸Ibid.

A second example of preaching from this era is provided by John of Antioch, more commonly known as Chrysostom. Although I had read about Chrysostom, this was the first that I learned it was not his name. Chrysostom, which translated means “golden mouth,” was given to him nearly a century after his death. He is regarded by many scholars as the greatest preacher in the history of the Christian movement.¹⁹

It is said that the greatest strength of Chrysostom’s sermons lay in his ability to apply scriptures to existing problems and situations. He combined his sense of sympathy and profound theological insight and related them to practical life.

One sermon attributed to Chrysostom is titled The Sixth Instruction and deals with the problem of people who forsake the worship service and go to the colosseum to watch the games or circus. This is a sermon that could very easily be preached in today’s pulpits! Also included in Chrysostom’s message, and appropriate for today, was a statement of our responsibility to minister to those who have fallen away.

T. H. Patison in his book, The History of Christian Preaching identifies three significant changes which took place after the initial impact of apostolic preaching:

1. In the character of this preaching we mark in the first three centuries a distinct progress. The artless story of the gospel, as Peter preached it on the day of Pentecost and as Paul summarized it in writing to the Corinthians, developed into a more systematic form of address.
2. Spiritual things were compared to those that were spiritual.
3. The homily, at first merely an informal address, developed into the sermon as we have it now.²⁰

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰see T. H. Pattison, The History of Christian Preaching (New York: MacMillen and Son, 1952).

These changes mark the primary differences between the apostolic preaching and the early church fathers. It is important for me to note that the changes were not in the context of what was preached, but rather, in the style with which it was presented. The shift was to a more logical form with a more clearly marked line of thought. It is with that same sense of seeking a logical form that I believe narrative theology has risen to a level of greater acceptance. In our society, which is influenced so heavily by electronic media, it strikes me that a style of proclamation that is already accepted by the population has a greater probability of communicating the Gospel. Speaking to the world in a manner that all will understand seems to be a logical form of approach.

NARRATIVE THEOLOGY AS DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE

Where does one find the place for narrative theology in the proclamation of the Gospel? With what sense of legitimacy may we consider dramatic monologue as a viable instrument for preaching? Eli Wiesel, in his book The Gates of the Forest recounts the following story:

“When the great Rabbi Israel Shem Tov saw misfortune threatening the Jews it was his custom to go into a certain part of the forest to meditate. There he would light a fire, say a special prayer and the miracle would be accomplished and the misfortune averted. Later, when his disciple, the celebrated Magid of Megritch had occasion, for the same reason, to intercede with heaven in the forest and say: ‘Master of the Universe, Listen! I do not know how to light the fire, but I am still able to say the prayer,’ and again the miracle would be accomplished. Still later, Rabbi Moshe-leiv of Sasov, in order to save his people once more, would go into the forest and say, ‘I do not know how to light the fire. I do not know the prayer, but I know the place and this must be sufficient.’ It was sufficient and the miracle was accomplished. Then it fell to Rabbi Israel of Rizhyn to overcome misfortune. Sitting in his armchair, his head in his hands, he spoke to God: ‘I am unable to light the fire, I do not know the prayer, and I cannot even find the place in the forest. All I can do is tell the story, and this must be sufficient.’ And it was sufficient. God made man because he loves stories.”²¹

²¹Eli Wiesel, The Gates of the Forest (New York: Schocken Books, 1982 82).

All Christians, in some manner or way, have been caught up by the story of the gospel of Jesus Christ. For stories are grounded in hope and in Christ we see the fulfillment of our hope and the power of resurrection. Having been caught up in the story, having become a part of the story we now find ourselves wanting to retell the story for that is the very nature of story telling. Stories have a way of impressing upon us the necessity to be told and retold and told again. And in their telling we come to understand that the way the story is told is of equal and perhaps even greater implication than the facts contained in the story. Throughout the history of the Christian church stories have preceded the establishment of the church and have in fact helped to produce it. The oral tradition of the scriptures speaks loudly to us and our experiences. And having been told time and time again the stories of faith have produced a theology. There is always more to the story than even the teller realizes! The individual interpretation by each listener opens up a myriad of possibilities. What might be the application to the life experience of each listener? What gesture or voice inflection influenced what was heard? Were there other factors which impacted one's ability to concentrate?

Roger Bacon posited the thought in the thirteenth century that there are two modes of knowing: argument and experience.

One mode is verbal and rational, sequential in operation, orderly. The other is intuitive, tacit, diffuse in operation, less logical and neat, a mode we often devalue culturally, personally, and even physiologically.²²

We have the ability to learn in each of these modes. We can be both linear/rational as well as nonrational/intuitive. In some people, one mode may

²²Robert Ornstein, The Psychology of Consciousness (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1977) 276.

be dominate. Dramatic monologue, as an approach to story telling is an appeal more to the experiential mode.

Preaching, and more specifically dramatic monologue as a style of preaching, finds a portion of its power in the concept that its' ideas are wrapped up within the preachers's personality. Dramatic monologue brings together all the buried strength of human personality. Ultimately, it expresses the intellect, requiring concentrated preparation as well as the creativity and spontaneity of a mind that has been motivated even further by the response of those hearing the story. Dramatic monologue involves the emotions, for dramatic monologue without a strong emotional drive is lacking in power and therefore benign. Dramatic monologue brings into play imagination, as images and illustrations become channels for the directing of abstract truth. It calls into service the physical characteristics of personality, the instrument of communication called the human voice, facial expressions, the vitality of appropriate gestures, and the creativity and appropriateness of costuming and make-up. Dramatic monologue sends a taproot into the very center of the spirit and draws from the deepest spiritual convictions of the dramatic monologist.

Dramatic monologue as preaching is the extension of the preacher's personality to the congregation/hearer. The dramatic monologue finds the major portion of its' strength from a relationship which is established between the speaker and the listener, a type of empathy. A great actor/actress carries the audience along with them, binding a theater full of people together in a combination of intellectual and emotional oneness and excitement. It should be the role of the preacher as a dramatic monologist to achieve the same level of synergy.

The secret to successful dramatic monologue preaching lies in its ability to

transform the biblical message and to incur relevance and immediacy. Preaching is the proclamation of eternal truth. It draws from Christian revelation and from Bible ideas which are always and everywhere true. Yet without the ability to bring the heavenly themes down to earthly application, any style will lose its impact. Bill Hybels, in his article, "Speaking to the Secular Mind," from Leadership magazine, points out the need for us to develop a sensitivity to the unchurched people. I find his words to be applicable to the church as well:

The first is to understand the way they (secular minds) think. For most of us pastors though, that is a challenge. A majority of my colleagues went to a Bible school or Christian college and on to seminary, and have worked in the church ever since. As a result, most have never been close friends with a non-Christian. They need to make their preaching connect with unchurched people, but they have never been close enough to them to gain an intimate understanding of how their minds work.²³

The same can be said for preaching the truth to those who have been raised in the church. One still needs to come to an understanding of where they are in order to bring the Gospel message to them in this new way. In any group or gathering of people there is a wide variety of human experiences and needs. These situations are of necessity the concern of real preaching. This is why the real link between a pastoral ministry and effective preaching is so close. Part of the miracle of the gospel is the remarkable way in which its proclamation can bring comfort or release or perhaps even motivation or challenge to those who have gathered to hear its proclamation. After we as preachers have exegeted the text and told the congregation what the text means and its historical, doctrinal, and philosophical setting it is our responsibility to present the text and help it speak to a particular time, situation and people. The reality is that most Christians encounter theology only in this form: preaching.

²³Bill Hybels, Speaking to the Secular Mind (Carol Stream, IL: Leadership, 1988) 29.

Many times those who have gathered for worship are not moved by the Biblical truths presented merely because of the familiarity of those Biblical truths. The worshiper has heard that particular narrative or pericope or parable many times since his or her childhood. This problem calls upon the preacher to present his/her material through new and fresh methods. Narrative preaching or more specifically, dramatic monologue preaching is one approach that is worthy of consideration.

The theology of the Bible is clothed in the flesh and blood of living characters. Human nature is essentially the same today as it was in Biblical times. The characters of the Testaments walk our streets in modern dress. Their temperament and their basic problems are the same as our own. Modern preaching dare not do less than clothe theological truth in flesh and blood. Christian worship at its best is dramatic and exciting, although not necessarily theatrical. The church has largely lost its sense of the dramatic nature of the gospel. In a time in our society when we seem so caught up in the visual approaches to both learning and entertainment, what better time to gather from the secular world its' dramatic style of presentation.

Narrative preaching is in the finest Biblical tradition. H. Grady Davis is of the opinion the gospel itself was made up principally of narration.²⁴ It is a series of accounts of people, places and happenings not simply rational arguments. Modern preaching appears to have reversed the percentages: while the gospel is nine tenths narration, most of our sermons are ninety percent exhortation!

Most Biblical ideas were first presented in story form. It is easier to remember a story than an ordinary sermon or even a poem. The prophets and the

²⁴H. Grady Davis, Design For Preaching (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1958).

author of Genesis 1 through 11 were master story tellers, as was our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The individual who seeks to present the gospel in this dramatic style of monologue would be well advised to draw heavily on the dramatic nature of the gospel and the natural interest that people seem to have in drama.

Skillfully done, narrative preaching including dramatic monologue, can improve the effective communication of the gospel. It creates a high level of interest in the message. Narrative preaching can be an effective teaching device, conveying Biblical knowledge, as well as stirring the emotions and moving the will of the hearer.

CHAPTER 2: A THEOLOGY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Decline of Christian Education in the Local Church

When Paul came to Ephesus, he asked some disciples of Jesus, "' Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' And they said, 'No, we have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit'" ¹⁵ If the Apostle were to come to the present-day American church, he would find it little difference from those disciples in ancient Ephesus. For it does not take long to realize the glaring ignorance of the content and message of the Bible among believers today.

In the 1960s and '70s the church school was in decline in The United Methodist Church.²⁶ There was little significance improvement in the 1980's.²⁷ As we look to the beginning of a new century, we have an opportunity to bring about a rebirth of Christian Education and once again give it a high priority. The United Methodist Church, during its two hundred plus years, has always supported Christian Education. We have prided ourselves on being a people with trained minds and warm hearts.²⁸

Studies conducted by the United Methodist Church²⁹ and the predecessor bodies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America³⁰ congregations where adult Christian education is strong and healthy, the whole church education program tends to be strong and healthy.

Even in those congregations where there are few children and youth, if adults are taking their Christian education opportunities seriously, their church education program and the entire church thrives.³¹

²⁵Acts 19:2, RSV

²⁶Division of Education, Board of Discipleship, Foundations for Local Church Education (Nashville, Discipleship Resources, 1979).

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Board of Discipleship, Foundations for Teaching and Learning In The United Methodist Church (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1979).

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Division for Life and Mission in the Congregation of the A.L.C. and the Division for Parish Services of the L.C.A., Yearbooks in Christian Education * V (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974.).

³¹Ibid.

There was a time when many people thought of the end of their schooling as the end of their learning. But today millions of adults are involved in lifelong learning. One dimension of their continuing growth is spiritual and one vehicle for spiritual growth is Bible study.³²

The pastor can help shape the educational ministry of the local church. One of the key pastoral functions is that of educator.³³ Pastoral leadership will influence the way Christian education is perceived and done in the local church. We are called to engage adults in a ministry of teaching and learning. The foundation for this ministry is found in our distinctive heritage.

The Word of God brought the world into being; it brings us as Christians, into being also. The Word creates in us a new heart, it confers a distinctive character on our communal life, it both liberates and obliges us. It is in our scriptures that we find the assurance that we have our origin and end in God; it is here we learn that God wants us and freely chooses to be in the most intimate possible relationship with us. The "bread of God's word that fed Jesus in the wilderness of Judea creates a deep and persistent hunger in us for the Author of our being. More than a need to know something about God, it is a thirst for God and a yearning to be known by God. Through the Word we come to want God; through the Word we discover a way to respond to God's invitation to an intimate relationship.

No charge given to the pastor as religious educator exceeds in significance the responsibility to help create and sustain in the laity a deep hunger for God. All preaching and all teaching must tend toward this end. Along with the responsibility to increase the parishioner's appetite for God, comes the require-

³²William A. Koppe and Andrew J. White, Are Congregations Good "Soil" for Educational Ministry? (Philadelphia: Augsburg Press, 1978).

³³Richard A. Hunt and Robert F. Kohler, The Candidacy Guidebook (Nashville: Division of Ordained Ministry, The United Methodist Church, 1994).

ment that this hunger be fed. The Word that transforms bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ and nourishes through the sacrament of Holy Communion is likewise spread on the table of scripture to which all Christians are invited. The problem for many pastors is identical to that of the king whose invitations to the marriage feast were ignored.³⁴ Parishioners often call loudly for more Bible study, but when a class is actually offered, relatively few will attend. Why should this be the case? I am convinced that this invitation to an intimate relationship with God through scriptures appropriately precedes the more commonly issued invitation on the pastor's part to learn more about the Bible. Put bluntly, the average layperson needs to encounter God in the Word, particularly in the person of Jesus Christ, before he or she is willing to expend much time and effort to learn about the Bible. It is nothing less than a hunger for God that motivates a serious investment of time and resources in the study of scripture, and the pastor is doomed to an endless cycle of failure and frustration with Bible study until and unless this very simple reality is recognized. No method or set of materials can guarantee to produce this hunger for God; the people we serve will have to see the hunger in us first.

An actual encounter with Christ in the Word moves the individual to repentance, and, whether we like it or not, a humbled, hungry heart is the necessary prerequisite for effective study. Only a humble heart is "teachable" Typically, it is the converted who long to study scripture. To affirm this is not to deny that the insights that come from study cannot convert. They do, and when this happens study becomes just one more act of devotion.

The discipline of study should ultimately provide a sound superstructure for devotion. It protects pastor and parishioner both from a self-satisfied subjec-

³⁴Matthew 22:1-3

tivity; it opens the heart so that more of the truth that makes us free may enter it. It is hard, slow, and not always rewarding work, but those who have become hungry for God will undertake it.

The laity look to their pastors to help them learn more about the Bible; and they are deeply disappointed when the clergy cannot “find the time” to do this on a regular basis.³⁵ When this happens, the unspoken message sent by the pastor is quite clear: Bible study is not all that important; if the laity want it, they must provide it for themselves. The more determined members of the parish will often attempt to lead their own Bible study groups and classes, sometimes with good effect but more often than not with disappointing and frustrating results. In many churches, church school teachers are left to themselves to select materials from catalogues and then to teach them with no other assistance than what a teacher’s guide can provide. Few laypersons have either the confidence or the skills needed to function as teachers of scripture, but many would gladly do so if these two vital elements could be supplied.

Given the reality of the average pastor’s job description, it is probably wishful thinking to expect clergy to be available on a regular basis to lead Bible study. Besides, there is a danger here in perpetuating the idea that the laity are essentially incapable of doing responsible religious education on their own. The issue for the pastor is to decide how best to deploy the time available for instructing in the Bible: What kind of religious education will serve to equip the laity to carry on effectively. The pastor must not think in terms of teaching only content; the primary task is to teach parishioners how to study. (See appendix A)

In our role as teacher, we must remember that our relationship to the parishioner is not only to see them as student, but to enable them to acquire such

³⁵Richard Rehfeldt, The Road to Educational Ministry (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974).

knowledge, skills and courage to see themselves as teacher. Teachers, both ordained and lay, embody meanings from the past for those they teach in the present. It involves a vitality of faith commitment.

One of the dilemmas congregations face is that the selection of designated teachers rarely raises questions concerning the clarity of the good news incarnated in a prospective teacher's message and method. The result is often that some people seeking to clarify the implications of their won commitments end up teaching those exploring the content of those same commitments. That apathy, confusion, and disillusionment are the consequences should not surprise us. The process is evident in the lectures of many teachers, whether in the Sunday church school, or the college or seminary classrooms. Relying primarily upon the words of former teachers and their resources, they seek to enliven and illuminate some past thought or event. Their teaching may hint at the possibilities of its power for our lives, but they have yet to be possessed by it themselves. They are still trying to grasp its implications in a rudimentary fashion. They do not incarnate its depth or breadth. The Gospel of John recognized the importance of this incarnational power. The Word becomes flesh. It dwells among us. That incarnational transformation does not occur as the result of reading the Bible Quarterly, upon certification from some training event, upon graduation from college or seminary, or by reading through a lesson plan on Saturday night. It occurs only in the focusing of one's commitment to the point that commitment is revealed in one's attitudes, relationships, and actions.

Secondly, teachers recreate the past to open up the future. This teaching task reflects again the distinctive relationship of the teacher to the heritage of the community of faith and to those in whom the community's future exists. At the very least, the teacher should keep in mind the vastness of what could be taught requires one to order and to choose from the field of options available to them.

One cannot teach everything he or she knows. The task would engulf them and overwhelm their students. Also, the constantly changing situation we live in alters the way we view and use the knowledge and skill available to us. We cannot assume that what worked yesterday will necessarily be useful today. The teacher must adapt, modify, reconstruct, recast, or create anew from the resources of the past to make relevant those experiences and meanings to our present circumstances. The wide range of methods and strategies available to the teacher to communicate with his or her students necessitates choosing, not only those approaches sensitive to the students capacities and interests and the teacher's experience and competence, but also those appropriate to the particular subject and task occupying their attention. Any methodology can give form to the teacher's intent. The effective use of any methodology requires imagination and creativity of the teacher.

Thirdly, we re-present them to those entering into and moving through the community of faith. Teaching is an action. It involves, in one sense, a performance or reenactment of what has been received or recreated. When we teach, we assume the presence of people whose relationship to us is defined by their own relationship to those meanings and experiences. They are pilgrims moving from one level of awareness to another.

Teachers engage in specific activities to facilitate this process. In doing so, they rely on a variety of theories about the nature of teaching and learning. They employ a wide range of methodologies. If one accepts the possibility that quite diverse assumptions regarding the nature and purpose of being human have validity, these theories and approaches to teaching all work. Teachers teach and people learn in environments governed by perspectives.

If pastors are going to listen as well as lecture, personalize their teaching as well as propound facts, encourage participation as well as attendance, strive to help persons think as well as remember, act as well as absorb feelings and ideas, enable persons to share the ministry as well as do the ministry themselves, then pastors must have a high level of trust in people. It means that pastors have to believe that God has created all people with talent and creativity. It means that pastors must channel their energies more and more toward developing the talent and potential leadership of lay leaders and students. It means that pastors must take seriously the ability of youth and adults alike to ask ultimate questions concerning their faith without asking the questions for them. It means that pastors must view leaders and students as responsible, rather than irresponsible, persons. To be sure, people are recalcitrant, balky, sinful. Therefore, pastors must continually urge, prod, and forgive. And because this is required of them constantly, pastors too can grow weary and become frustrated. Nevertheless, I firmly hold that the more pastors become open to the leadership of congregational members, the more they can accept abstinence or foot-dragging.

If pastors are to grow as enablers in educational ministry, it means they must also be open to evaluation. In a team ministry this evaluation can often come from fellow pastors. Those who serve a congregation alone often must allow the laity to evaluate their ideas as well as their work.

As important as listening, personalizing and enabling are for the ministry, pastors must maintain a creative tension between these vital aspects and proclamation. For there is always the danger of striving to do "meaningful things" and forgetting to confront persons with the claims of Jesus as Lord.

SECTION II: ". . . WHEREFORE ART THOU?"

CHAPTER 3 THE SETTING

The Community

The congregation of Faith United Methodist Church is located in the south central Nebraska community of Kearney, Buffalo County. The population of the City of Kearney was indicated at 28,328 in 1986 by the YMCA of the USA. (Table I) An age distribution analysis indicates that of this population, 51.2 percent fall between the ages of 18 to 44. This figure reflects the presence of a 10,000 student population at the local University of Nebraska-Kearney. The median age of Kearney is 27.5 years. By race analysis, 98 percent of the population is white, 1.5 percent is Hispanic and 0.2 percent is Black. Males comprise 47.62 percent of the population and females equal 52.38 percent.

The location of Kearney along the Interstate 80-Platte River Valley development corridor, finds it in the center of a cluster of small cities, all within a 45 mile radius. Kearney and its neighboring communities are market centers providing services to their resident populations and to the surrounding farm population. Because of their proximity to one another and their orientation to the surrounding population, the several cities have overlapping market areas and vie for some of the same dollars.

Kearney has a strong economy and that economy has expanded over the recent past. It is competitive with its neighbors, and its commercial base has grown faster than the state as a whole.

Table II displays several indicators of the relative economic strength of Kearney and the counties of neighboring communities. The indicators of economic health in that Table II incorporates 14 different measures including labor force participation, poverty, retail sales, and housing values, and describe the relative overall health of the local economies. The retail intensity ratio is a mea-

sure of the relative drawing power of a market over its trade area. Likewise, the distributive nodality measure incorporates 71 variables to describe the influence exercised by a market center over its trade area. The values derived for Kearney and its neighbors tend to cluster on the high side of each scale. Thus each is among the relatively healthier economies of Nebraska.

The Church

The beginning of the work of Faith United Methodist Church is found in the creation of the United Brethren Church on July 12, 1871, at which time the first United Brethren sermon was preached by the Rev. D. K. Flickinger, missionary secretary of the United Brethren Church, in the home of Asbury Collins.

This was one of the first, if not the first sermon preached in the city of Kearney. While written reports of the day speak to the eloquence of the Reverend Flickinger, no attempt was made at this time to establish the work of the United Brethren Church.

Some time during the early part of the year 1886, the Reverend J. J. Smith came to Kearney with the purpose of organizing a church. He remained but a short time and was followed by the Reverend C. M. Brooke, president of Gibbon College, in the fall of 1886. Facilities were rented from the Swedish Lutheran Church to house the new congregation and later the building was purchased by the fledgling group to permanently house their ministry. Due to the large amount of time required of Reverend Brooke at the college, he sent a student of his, a Mr. Spencer, who supplied the work of the church for five months.

In February, 1887, C. M. Brooke, assisted by Dr. Z. Warner, organized a class. According to records, 29 people were enrolled.

On November 4, 1887, the organization was incorporated. At this time the trustees purchased a lot and small house on 25th Street and Avenue D, at a cost

of \$1,000.

In the month of February, 1888, the Rev. G. K. Little held a meeting in the new brick church, which resulted in a number of conversions. After a period of a few months, the Rev. F. W. Jones, a student at Gibbon College, came as a supply pastor and remained five months. In the Spring of 1890, the Rev. A. A. Armen of the Indiana Conference came and remained with the church for several months.

The Reverend H. W. Trueblood, sent out by the missionary board of the Church, took charge of the work on October 20, 1890. He at once moved into the small house on 25th and Avenue D. Being unable to rent a building in which to hold services, he bought a small building that was used for a carpenter shop and moved it on the back of the lot and made a small chapel of it, which was opened February 22, 1891.

The dedicatory service was conducted by the Reverend J. D. Fye, presiding Elder. This was used until the fall of 1898, when the brick church on 26th and Avenue A, formerly rented for services, was purchased from the Swedish Lutheran church. The building was dedicated October 4, 1896.

After a number of years, the old church became inadequate for the needs of the congregation and it was decided to enlarge the building. The enlargement was effected during 1909.

The history of Grace Evangelical Church dates back to the year 1886, when the Rev. M. B. Young held a tent meeting in the north part of the city. W. L. Dillow was the first pastor of the Odessa Mission and organized the Anderson Appointment east of Kearney in 1887. In 1892, L. G. Brooker served the Odessa, Anderson and Amherst appointments from Kearney. Then in March, 1893, when the annual conference session met in Blue Springs, the Kearney and Anderson Appointments were detached from the Odessa Mission and the appointment was called the Kearney Mission.

August 31, 1893, marked the first organization of the society in the home of the pastor, L. G. Brooker. Trustees were elected from amongst the 30 charter members. With the assistance of friends they were able to buy a building which had been used by the Women's Christian Temperance Union and was located at 16th and Avenue C.

In 1946, the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and the Evangelical Church united to form a new denomination - The Evangelical United Brethren Church. In 1951, the two Nebraska Conferences united to form one. This meant that in Kearney there were two congregations of the same denomination and both a part of the same annual conference. In July of 1952, these two united to form a new congregation called the Faith Evangelical United Brethren Church. The congregation decided to use the property at 16th Street and Avenue C until such time as a new church would be constructed.

Plans were made for a new church as early as 1945. The former Grace church began a series of semiannual cash rallies to raise money for that purpose. The former First church also contributed largely to the financial success of the campaign in that their property was sold and added to the new church fund.

The united congregation approved the recommendation of the Planning Committee on December 9, 1953, to begin building as soon as possible. Excavation began the next day. The corner stone was laid September 5, 1954. Dedication services were conducted June 5, 1955. The facility was declared debt free in 1961.

After six years of planning and more than a century and a half of intermittent attempts, the Methodist Church and Evangelical United Brethren Church united into a single denomination, the United Methodist Church, in Dallas, Texas, on April 23, 1968. The declaration of union for the two Nebraska denominations was held in June of 1968. Thus Faith Evangelical United Brethren

Church became the Faith United Methodist Church.]

In 1970, the Bethel United Methodist Church entered into cooperation with Faith United Methodist for pastoral supply. At this time they hired an assistant to the pastor. In 1972, Haven Chapel United Methodist Church joined with Faith and Bethel to form what became Faith Parish. An associate pastor was appointed to assist in the expanded duties of the parish. In 1985, following an extensive parish evaluation, Faith Parish dissolved making Faith United Methodist a one pastor/one church appointment. Bethel and Haven Chapel churches continue to be a two point charge.

In the same year that the Faith Parish was dissolved, the author was appointed pastor of Faith United Methodist Church. In the wake of the painful and difficult Parish Evaluation, several members of Faith United Methodist expressed the opinion to me that the death of their congregation was imminent and that it was only a matter of time before it would be necessary to turn the key in the lock of the front door and walk away.

A review of the Journals of the Nebraska Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church indicated several possible reasons as to why this message of gloom and doom was so heavy in the hearts of the congregation. In the five years preceding my arrival, there had been ten different pastors, Senior and Associate, appointed to the Faith Parish. I was the fifth Senior Pastor in ten years. During the immediate twenty year history of this congregation they had seen their numbers grow from 524 members with an average attendance in worship of 228 to a peak of 705 members in 1976 and a topping out of average attendance in worship of 280 in 1972. These figures had dwindled to a membership of 447 and an average attendance of 141 at the time of my appointment.

(Table III)

In the first four years of my appointment as Pastor to Faith United Methodist the congregation has seen a resurgence of interest and participation. During that period of time 192 new members have been received bring the net number of membership to 555 or a 24% increase. The average attendance in Sunday worship has increased 77% to an average of approximately 250.

The current worshipping congregation of Faith United Methodist has a lower median age than that of four years. The number of new member families with children living in the home has caused an increase in our Sunday School enrollment. It has also resulted in the creation of a new adult Sunday School class for the parents. These new, younger members have also created a new Adult Fellowship and Women's Bible Study and their energy has brought back a new found interest in United Methodist Men. Another interesting addition has been the presence of a small group of University of Nebraska - Kearney students who worship with us. Their presence has seen the creation of a Sunday Morning class for them as well as a Sunday Evening fellowship group for Single Young Adults.

One can only wonder what the future will hold for Faith United Methodist Church. Research and projections by the Central District Strategy Committee of the United Methodist Church in Nebraska shows that Faith church is currently growing at a rate that exceeds twenty percent. It is projected that the membership could reach 700 by the turn of the century.

Population growth projections to the year 2000 reflect an anticipated increase of 16% and housing starts also indicate continued growth in that there has been a 136% increase from 1985 through August of 1988. These figures, plus the projected growth of the University of Nebraska - Kearney, the number of new business starts, and industrial employment expansions seems to indicate that there is more than probable cause to believe that Faith United Methodist Church has the universe from which to draw additional members.

Focus and Design

Till I come, attend to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have which was given you prophetic utterance when the council of Elders laid their hands upon you. Practice these duties, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. Take heed to yourself and to your teaching: Hold to that, for by so doing you will save yourself and your hearers.

I Timothy 4:13

The focus of this project was to develop a preaching/teaching presentation of four Biblical characters. The format was designed to fit into a typical thirteen week curriculum quarter. The first week was an introduction and orientation as to who the four Biblical characters were to be studied. During weeks 2,3 and 4 the group studied Peter and a first person, dramatic monologue was presented by the writer during the worship services on the following Sunday. Weeks 5,6 and 7 found us studying Paul, followed by a first person dramatic monologue the next Sunday. The same pattern was followed with Amos and Job being the other two characters. Each of the presentations was developed by the writer.

At the conclusion of each character study/sermon, an evaluation was conducted on a random sampling of fifteen percent of those in attendance. The average attendance at each of the worship services was 250. The random sampling was determined by those who had received a worship bulletin with a special notation inside. The evaluations were lead by one of the Project Associates. Each of the Project Associates were also asked to evaluate the presentation at a meeting held at the end of each section. At the conclusion of the quarter, a general evaluation was distributed to the Project Associates, asking for their input and comments on the project.

The Program Design was implemented within the context of Faith United Methodist Church, Kearney, Nebraska, as approved. There were no significant

changes made in the Design as presented to the Nebraska Regional Group and approved by the Commission at United Theological Seminary. The project began by inviting the nine Project Associates to suggest Biblical characters which they thought would be of interest to the congregation. Following their input, and dialogue with myself, the four previously mentioned figures were selected.

A bias that was present in the design portion of the project was that an individual's awareness of Biblical personages was a combination of three areas. First of all there would be their favorites. These would include the people of the Bible whose stories they had heard on more than one occasion and perhaps found portions of that story with which they identified. The second area would contain the names of Biblical characters of whom they had heard, and believed they would like to know more. The final category contains all those Biblical people at the mention of whose name the typical response is, "Huh?"

Recognizing that these three categories are not exactly the same for everyone, I asked the Project Associates to engage in dialogue amongst themselves as to who they would like to see portrayed in a dramatic monologue sermon. This series of conversations directly contributed to the selection of the four individuals studied. It was my hope that by allowing the Project Associates to select the characters to be studied, they would be more inclined to attend the Bible Studies during the course of the project. I was pleased to have excellent attendance at the Bible studies by both Project Associates and other members of the congregation. The average attendance was 24 per session.

Through participation in the studies, and the subsequent dramatic monologue sermons, the people were given the opportunity to broaden their knowledge as to the person and setting for four people of the Bible. Not only did we study the person, but also, their time in history, their geographical, social, and political environments. We also endeavored to touch upon the lives of those

other people who were significant to our primary character.

While the Bible Studies were conducted during Sunday evening services, the dramatic monologue sermons were presented during the Sunday morning worship services. On Sundays when a dramatic monologue sermon was not scheduled, a sermon was preached based on one of the lectionary pericopes for that particular day. In order to enhance the moment of arrival of our Biblical "visitor" on those four mornings, it was necessary for me to remain in seclusion, in makeup and costume, until the appropriate time for me to appear in the worship service. Faith United Methodist had no history of using lay leadership in Sunday worship, save for special occasions. In order to share with the congregation the opportunity for them to be in this area of ministry, I approached the Staff Parish Relations Committee and the Worship Work Area, a total of 18 people, and asked them to be a part of the project in this matter.

The invitation to participate was couched in a theology of general ministry that believes that our participation is both a gift given us and a requirement put upon us. Full participation in this ministry can never be considered optional for any Christian; it is a privilege and its importance is never lessened by the scandal of those who neglect their membership vows and the faithful fulfillment of their missional tasks. This is, as our tradition has said, a "priesthood of all believers." The "call of God" to every Christian is rich in both mystery and diversity. No one can maintain that another must respond in the same manner, or with identical feeling or action. Immensely diverse gifts of talent and widely different commitments of time are the marks of this ministry.

During the six months preceding implementation of the project, a portion of time during both of these committees monthly meetings was devoted to instruction and discussion. Topics for instruction included: the role of laity in ministry, a variety of aspects that relate to worship, including meaning, place,

history, leadership and practical skills for worship leadership. From this talent pool, and other members of the congregation, a cadre of twelve lay liturgists was developed.

The writer of the project developed the weekly Bible Studies. A variety of styles were used as well as mediums. Work sheets, videotape, small group discussions and role play were some of the techniques used. A sample of the work sheets used is included in Appendix C.

Tabulation of a simple ten point evaluation form at the conclusion of each section and the end of the project, indicates that the congregation found the Bible studies to be helpful and enlightening. The dramatic monologue sermons were consistently rated above the ninetieth percentile by evaluators. This is not to say that all found them to be their preferred style of homiletical presentation. Additionally, the evaluators were asked as to the frequency this style of preaching could be used. For the most part, quarterly was as often as most thought appropriate.

Each of the dramatic monologue presentations were evaluated on four points: make-up; content of presentation; delivery of presentation; over-all effectiveness. Responses were plotted for each character in all four areas. Averages were determined for each of the four evaluated areas as well as for each of the four characters for all four areas. The presentation of Peter received thirty six evaluation forms, Job received 32 responses, Amos received 34 responses and the Paul presentation received 42 forms.

The make-up category average was 9.225. The ratings by character were as follows: Peter, 9.4; Job 8.9; Amos, 9.3; Paul 9.3. Amos and Paul fall within one standard deviation above the average and Paul was in the second standard deviation above the average. Job's make-up, which was very bland in color, fell two standard deviations below the average.

Evaluation of the content of the presentations found Peter and Paul well above the average of 9.475 with scores of 9.8 and 9.7 respectively. Job was slightly below the average while Amos was well into the second standard deviation below the average.

Delivery of the sermons was rated the most consistent of the four evaluated categories. The average was 9.65 with Peter at 9.7, Job at 9.5, Amos at 9.6 and Paul at 9.8. This area deals primarily with the preacher's ability to project the character to the congregation/audience. The data would seem to indicate that the preacher's style was consistently appealing even when the content seemed lacking.

The over all effectiveness of the four sermons found Peter, Job, and Paul equal to or above the average of 9.3. Amos was at 9.0. It is interesting to note that Job scored lower than Amos in the areas of make-up and delivery but higher in content and over all effectiveness. They came within one tenth of a point in total average.

The averages for the four characters were: Peter, 9.6; Job, 9.275; Amos, 9.23; and Paul 9.6. The over all average of 9.425 finds the New Testament characters above and the Old Testament characters below the average. Is there a particular reason why the New Testament presentations scored higher? Is it because of greater familiarity with the character? Was there a bias within the presenter that came through in the presentation? The statistical data is pressed to answer these questions. Subsequent replications of this model might include more narrative evaluation on the part of the audience to aid in determining the difference.

The teaching approach might be utilized more frequently if a series of video tapes could be produced showing an actor portraying the Biblical character. This would allow the basic format of study to be maintained but without

injecting it into the Sunday morning worship pattern. Additionally, this would not require the pastor of a local congregation to become involved in the portrayal, if he/ were uncomfortable in so doing. The format did seem to address the bias that today's society, both secular and sacred, are open to this type of Biblical/homiletical presentation. Responses from participants indicated a high degree of acceptance. This style of presentation has had only a small level of utilization in the local church. I believe that most pastors do have the ability to develop and present this style of study/preaching.

Further reflection on this model might reveal an approach in which the themes found in a particular Biblical character might be presented in the personages of modern people. Perhaps Amos could be presented as a farmer or gardener who is called of God to preach in his or her community. The preacher could identify questions that are being asked in the life of his or her community and paraphrase them through a Biblical character who is presented in modern day image. Possible questions could be: What is God doing through this person? What is this person resisting that God is bringing to their life?

Future developments could include presentations of several different people who observed or participated in the same event, i.e. people who witnessed the crucifixion, people who were healed by Jesus, each of the disciples. Other approaches might include dialogues in which members of the congregation might participate as characters.

The development of drama in the presentation of the Gospel was well received by the congregation in context. Variations on the model were developed by the writer for use at multi-church youth retreats as well as week-end revivals. Indications are strong that this style is applicable in a variety of settings both in and out of the sanctuary.

SECTION III: "TO BE OR NOT TO BE, THAT IS THE QUESTION!"

CHAPTER 5: MAKEUP AND COSTUMING: CREATING THE ROLE

RESEARCHING THE CHARACTER

The foundation on which any character makeup is based is, of course, the character, and the primary purpose of character makeup is to help the presenter reveal that character. There are three basic steps which can be followed in arriving at a suitable conception of the makeup for a realistic character:

1. Find out as much as you can (or as much as may be useful about the character.
2. Visualize the character, considering ways in which what you have learned about him/her can be reflected in his/her physical appearance.
3. Adapt, as well as you can, your ideas about the physical appearance of the character to your face.

The primary source of information about the characters to be portrayed in this type of presentation is the Bible. Commentaries, Biblical dictionaries, an atlas of the lands of the Bible would certainly be supplemental resources. Through the years, artists have portrayed their ideas as to what a particular character might have looked like. Their images may also serve as a beginning point for developing your makeup and costuming ideas.

In arriving at an appropriate visual image of the character you may find it useful to examine the various factors that might be influential in determining the character's appearance. For convenience, these factors can be divided into seven groups: genetics, environment, health, disfigurements, fashion, age and personality. These divisions are obviously not mutually exclusive, nor are they necessarily of equal importance in finding out what you should know about a character.

DESIGNING THE IMAGE

Once you have decided what you want the character to look like, the next step is put your ideas into concrete form, either an experimental makeup or a

sketch showing what you have in mind. Making a sketch or a drawing of the makeup can be extremely helpful.

You have the advantage of knowing, better than anyone else, the character as you want to portray him/her. You also have the opportunity to experiment with the makeup over a period of time until you achieve the results you want. An instant-picture camera with which you can take pictures of yourself (or have a friend do it) can, if it is available, provide the means of looking at the makeup objectively. You can then make any changes or corrections that seem desirable.

Before beginning even to experiment with the application of makeup, it is necessary to have suitable equipment which to work. And until you have learned the tricks of doing good work with whatever equipment happens to be available, you would do well to obtain the best you can afford. That does not mean that you need a lot of makeup. In the beginning, a small kit will serve quite well as long as it contains what you have determined you really need. From time to time, additional supplies can be added.

Your individual makeup kit should be portable. It should be large enough to accommodate all of the makeup you usually carry with room for additional items you may want to add later.

The kit should have compartments or divided trays to keep your materials organized and easily available. Whether they are made of metal, plastic, or wood is a matter of personal preference. What kind of makeup container you doesn't really matter as long as it holds the amount of makeup you need, keeps the makeup in order, is convenient to use, and is generally practical for you. Your requirements and your budget will probably determine your choice. Personally, I found a cantilever fishing-tackle box to serve well. I initially purchased a basic makeup kit distributed by Bob Kelly Cosmetics, Inc. and have added additional supplies from them as well as from Stein's Makeup. These

products are usually available from most costume shops, University bookstores or by mail from a variety of suppliers such as Christian Costume Company, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Since the problems and procedures involved in the application of the various types of makeup are quite different and multifaceted, the scope of this paper prohibits dealing with them. The person who is seriously interested in pursuing the knowledge and skill of theatrical makeup might consider these three sources:

1. Colleges and Universities often offer classes under their Fine Arts/Theater departments on the subject. Consider enrolling for the one semester introductory class.
2. Makeup for Theater, Film and Television. Step by Step Photographic Guide by Lee Baygan. Published by Drama Book Specialists (Publishers): 150 West 52nd Street, New York, NY 10019.
3. Stage Makeup - 6th Edition. By Richard Corson. Published by Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

Developing costumes and props for a character would follow many of the steps as for makeup. Upon having decided on what is needed, one can then create their own or purchase them relatively inexpensively through a number of supply houses. I have found Christian Costumes of Raleigh, NC, and Lacey Fashions, Inc. of New York, NY to be good sources.

CHAPTER 6: A STUDY OF SIMON PETER, "THE ROCK"

SESSION ONE: Called to Discipleship

We find him standing on the shore of the Sea of Galilee at a town called Capernaum, just west of the Jordan River. This is where we find Simon trying to eke out an existence in a fishing business with his brother Andrew and the sons of Zebedee, James and John. Scripture makes it clear that Simon is married, probably with children, and lives in Capernaum. His father, John, sometimes called Jonah (Matt.16:17), raised Simon and Andrew in Bethsaida which is located on the eastern end of the Sea of Galilee. This "city of fishermen" is called Bethsaida because it was ideally located for such an activity. Undoubtedly, Simon learned the family fishing business at a very early age while pulling in nets at the side of his father.

Having found him preparing for his day's work, Simon is undoubtedly stripped to the waist, working in his boat, out in the water. The day has begun early. Before the sun rose, Simon and Andrew would launch their tiny boat, having loaded it with nets, and would push out through the early morning mist onto the lake for a day's work. Fishing in those days was much more rigorous an activity than the mere dropping of a line in a still calm lake. It consisted of throwing nets, gathering them in and then pulling the nets into the boat. This vocational pursuit required an extensive amount of hard work and undoubtedly it helped Peter to develop himself into a strong, physical specimen of humanity. The climate of this area was warm in the winter and hot in the summer. After gathering the day's catch, the fish must be taken to shore and transported and sold in nearby towns, as there was no modern refrigeration.

Given the hard work to which he had become accustomed, Simon was no doubt also a rugged individual when it came to living life. He was a no non-

sense man, a man who preferred action to philosophical discussions. Simon was an honest man who did an honest day's work. He was a simple, straight forward man who usually said what he pleased and sometimes without a great deal of thought. At times, he probably lacked tact, but at least you always knew where stood and for what he stood. He was an unpretentious man of modest means and traditional values.

But what was this country like. This land that would have influenced the attitudes and values of one called Simon. What were the cultural geographical influences on the life of men and women of that day.

Palestine in the first century was an area of geographical contrasts: high mountains that sometimes had snow on them in the winter and low lands where the deserts blistered with heat. In between the river valleys were incredibly fertile, offering rich soil at a temperate climate suitable for olive trees, grape vines, grains, poultry and livestock. Galilee was a rural area where most of the people lived simple lives, rooted in the land. They looked with disdain upon the aristocrats in Jerusalem, with their elaborate rituals, compromised values and philosophical speculations. In turn the citizens of Judea often considered the Galileans to be educationally inferior and of mixed blood. Life in Galilee, as through out Palestine, was a hard life compared to twentieth century civilization. There were no modern conveniences, houses were made of stone, mud, thatched roofs. Heat was by fire, there was little police protection and no doctors in the modern sense. Disease was the rule of the day. Slavery was the excepted norm, and slaves were secured through warfare or as a result of bankruptcy. Criminals were treated harshly. There was only limited communication, important news travelled with runners and was posted at the town centers.

These times were ones of great social and political change. As the Greco/Roman world clashed with the traditional Jewish culture. For the past couple

hundred years, Jews had become increasingly hellenized through the growing predominance of Greek culture and Roman rule. Jews began to speak Greek, read Greek literature and entered the larger world of commerce that extended throughout the Roman empire. These hellenized Jews often migrated from Palestine and could be found scattered in the urban areas throughout the Mediterranean. These secularized Jews stood for compromise with Rome, and the absorption of the best of Greek culture. In contrast there were the Orthodox Jews, who clung to the old loyalties. Orthodox Jews, with fierce rigidity, wanted to remain a separate people, a clean people, "a chosen people." Jews were to live physically separate from Gentiles and have as little contact as possible. Keeping the pagan influences out of the Jewish religion and temple was of primary importance. The extreme version of this separateness was the Essenes, that aesthetic band of Jews who fled to the desert to live pure lives and await the coming of the Lord. Their writing and common life have received fascinating attention as the Dead Sea Scrolls have become translated and understood. Apparently John the Baptist had some connection or at least some indirect influence by this community. The political version of this desire to separate is the zealots, who fought for the overthrow of Roman occupation and the reestablishment of the nation of Israel. Armed rebellion simmered just below the political surface and threatened to break out as it did a few centuries earlier and as it would just a few short decades from now. This later revolt, in 70 A.D., will result in the complete destruction of the Jewish Temple, and the end of any Jewish political entity until modern times.

Galilee was in the middle of this social, political and religious turmoil. Galilee was strongly Jewish, made up of rural Jews who were rooted in the Promised Land. They hated the Roman occupation, the Pagan religion and the enforced taxation. Galilee was surrounded by the Greco/Roman world and its

influences. Just up the road from Galilee was Caesarea, the city built and named for Rome's emperor. Caesarea was the military headquarters for the Roman army at the eastern end of the Mediterranean. Greek commerce and influence was everywhere. Note that Simon's brother's name "Andrew" is a Greek name as is "Phillip" another of Jesus' disciples from Bethsaida. Certainly, Simon spoke Aramaic, the common person's Hebrew. Yet, Simon might very well have been partially bilingual, knowing just enough Greek to trade in the neighboring towns and provinces. The tension between Jewish and separateness and Greco/Roman universalism marked Galilee in Simon's day.

All four gospels record that Simon was one of the first disciples to be called by Jesus. All four gospels record that when Jesus first encountered Simon, he was fishing. How obvious. How normal. Yet into the normal everyday life came the abnormal, the unusual and the extraordinary. Matthew and Mark's versions of the call of Peter was pretty straight forward. Jesus called Simon to "follow me" and sure enough he does. In other versions, Jesus promises to make Simon "a fisher of men." Simon's occupation as a fisherman is important and symbolic. Instead of catching fish, Simon will be catching people. But not until he has first prepared.

Read the following gospel of Simon's call:

1. John 1:40-42
2. Matthew 4:18-20
3. Mark 1:16-18
4. Luke 5:1-11

Having considered these scriptural accounts, who are the people present? What happened? What did Jesus say to Simon? In considering the Luke passage, how does this differ from the other three?

To our modern minds it seems most unusual that Simon would just pick up and follow Jesus. Simon had a business to run, a wife and family to take care

of, and an ill mother-in-law. If we were there, we could have thought of a hundred more excuses as well. Yet scripture records that Simon picked up his life and followed. That is a great example of faith. It might cause us to remember a bit of the story of Abraham, who became the history of the Jewish people, when he too picked up and followed a divine invitation (Genesis 12). He too left his homeland, his people and his business and began a "journey in faith."

Simon was a man of action, a man known for his impulsive acts and words, a man of boldness. Certainly this action is in keeping with Simon as we will come to know him. Yet, I do not think that it is disrespectful to speculate more on the factors that led Simon to accept Jesus's invitation.

In some sense, Simon had been prepared for this moment all of his life. God was working in Simon's life long before he ever knew of the name of Jesus, preparing him for a journey in faith. Certainly Simon's religious education prepared him. Certainly regular worship, prayer and study prepared him. Certainly Simon's parents prepared him by showing him love, honesty and integrity. In a sense, maybe fishing prepared Simon, too. Maybe he stood in awe of nature's power in the storm or of creation's beauty in the sunsets. Maybe at night he stared at the heavens and wondered if the creator of such majesty could be personal. Maybe too, the social turmoil of his surroundings also led him to wonder if there was an alternative to this bickering, rivalry and madness. Perhaps too, Simon had stood by the graves of loved ones or seen little children suffer needlessly and wondered about the meaning of life. In all of these ways God might have been preparing for this day.

Consider how God prepared you for faith. Reflect on the ways in which God prepared you for eventual conscious faith. Consider your family life, your schooling, and your early church experience. Would you have ever come to faith if you did not have these early influences?

The other amazing thing about the stories about Simon's first encounter with Jesus is that all of them record that Jesus gives Simon a new name. "The Rock." We are so accustomed to thinking of "Peter" as a proper name that we forget that at the time of Jesus, it was simply a common noun meaning a stone or rock. It was the Hebrew custom to give a person a new name to symbolize a new identity. Examples of this custom dot the Old Testament (Genesis 17:5, 15:1ff, 32:28). Another version of this custom is to give a person a nick name which says something about the person's character or suggested a promised or expected characteristic. Jesus himself refers to James and John, Simon's fishing partners, as the "sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17). From the earliest encounter with Jesus, Simon is called "The Rock." It is best understood as a nickname or a title which should be read "Simon, the Rock" and the nickname sticks. Simon is referred to more and more as just plain "Peter" (Cephas in Aramaic is "rock" which translates into Greek as "Peter"). Through out the ministry of Jesus, However, never forget that Peter has not yet become a proper name. Everywhere Jesus calls Simon "Peter" it is as if he is saying "Simon, the Rock.

How incredible it is that Jesus should name "Simon, the rock". How did Jesus know? How would he know how appropriate, how ironical it would be to call Simon "the Rock". Simon is the impulsive one, the man of strong passions, the one to speak first and think later. Rock? What a joke! Simon is anything but a rock, a firm and trustworthy foundation. What did Jesus see in this burly fisherman from Galilee that led him to call Simon "the Rock"?

In some ways, Jesus' call to Simon is a call to become a rock as well as a fisher of men. "Follow me Simon," Jesus might have said, "and I will make you into a rock. Follow me and you will become your name; fulfill your destiny; be more that you are!" Is that not the promise that Christ makes to all of us when he invites us into discipleship? "Come, follow me. I will make you be more that

you are. You will become God's promise." That is the excitement of discipleship. That is the lure of discipleship.

Among Jesus' twelve disciples several of them were fishermen. Why do you think that fishermen might make good Christian disciples and apostles? What is it about fishing that would have molded men to become good apostles?

If God was going to give you a nickname, what would he call you? Reflect on how God views you. In God's eyes what is your potential, your promise? Symbolize this promise in a name.

Sometimes it is interesting when and where the extraordinary breaks into the ordinary. Sometimes special moments happen when we least expect them. The following passages represent four of those occasions, read each of them and record in the space provided the event that takes place.

Matthew 16:13-18

Mark 5:35-43

Matthew 17:1-13

Matthew 26:36-46

Peter's decision of faith grew out of an ongoing, lived relationship with Jesus. With the experience of having witnessed the afore mentioned acts of ministry along with many others, yet we do not have an earthly Jesus with which to live. How can we develop a persona lived relationship with Jesus? What are the ingredients?

Was there a point in your walk with God that you can identify yourself as making a decision of faith? Describe this moment. What led up to it? What was

the situation? What were the implications of your decision?

Do you agree with the premise that there are few “proofs” before faith but there are often confirming spiritual proofs after one believes? Was this Peter’s experience? Has this been your experience?

Reflect on your spiritual peak experiences. What was the context? What was the need that God was speaking to? How is your life different as a result of this experience?

SESSION TWO: PRIDE AND DENIAL

Read each of the three following scripture passages and briefly record in the space provided what has happened in each of these encounters:

Mark 14:26-31

Mark 14:53-54

Mark 14:66-72

What a time of disappointment for Peter. . . not to mention our Lord and Savior. At the time of trial when Jesus needed his support the most, Peter failed him and not once, but three times. Now certainly it was understandable that many would fall away and turn their back on Jesus, but why did Peter have to deny him too?

Why did Peter have to deny him not once, not twice, but three times? Surely once, we could excuse as a typical Simon slip of the tongue. He seemed to be one who was always on the edge of spontaneity, sometimes allowing very foolish remarks to roll over his lips. One time we could excuse, but three times? We cannot rationalize Peter’s denial as a foolish slip of the tongue. No, he denied his Lord.

So how do we understand this denial. Why did Peter do it so thoroughly? Surely he knew that Jesus must suffer and that Jesus would rise again in triumph. How did Peter come to be so totally disappointed in Jesus? And where does this incident fit into Peter's personal journey in faith?

As we discussed Session 1, there was already a great deal of tension in the air of the Palestine area of the Roman Empire, but the events from the time of Peter's confession up until Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem seems to exacerbate the situation. For many months now, Jesus was headed towards Jerusalem, the religious and political authorities were watching very carefully. They winced under his attacks on hypocrisy. They grew angry as they watched his ministry of miracles and healings. They became jealous as crowds followed him everywhere. His recognition was spreading through out the land. No where could he travel without being recognized. All the events, each of the comments, seemed to apparently affirm that which Peter had known all these months; that Jesus of Nazareth is the long expected messiah.

Perhaps one way to understand this incident of Peter's denial is in the conflicting understanding of Messiahship. Peter, like most Jews of his day, probably expected a political Messiah, the one who was to reestablish the throne of David, the one who was to ride into Jerusalem on a white charger with a sword in his right hand. Peter's Messiah was also be a religious reformer, the one who was going to cleanse the religious life of Israel. He was going to restore the rule of justice, purify the country, teach God's righteousness in all of the nation. Such a Messiah would have to be a person of power, of influence, of charisma. He would posses the powers to heal, perform miracles and reform. Peter had seen all of theses signs of power in his Lord. This gave him the courage and the strength to profess him Messiah.

But how did Jesus understand himself to be the Messiah? It would seem

that his was not primarily a concern with people's politics, but with internal attitudes, directions of loyalties, purity of commitment and heart. Jesus' Messiah came to proclaim the true vision of God and to teach God's simple but radical commandments. Jesus' Messiah was a prophet that called people to repentance. His Messiah was one that understood that if he could change the hearts of the people, then the social and political would inevitably be changed as well. He did not see that what was wrong with Israel was not political but spiritual. The Messiah of Jesus wanted to start a spiritual reformation not a political revolution.

What kind of sign did Peter seem to want? What kind of Messiah do you want? If God was going to send a special representative into your life, to save you from your sins, what kind of "Messiah" would it have to be?

In once sense, this incident of Peter's denial must be seen in light of an understanding of his pride and obedience. For Peter was a proud man, a man who had several sources of pride. Peter struggled with Jesus' radical message of forgiveness, status reversal, and the like. Peter agreed that these were good teachings in principal but he always had a hard time actually living up to them. Up till now, Peter has been unable to fully change, to be the person God wanted him to be. Peter is still prone to both promises, action without forethought, and foolish remarks. Peter is still prone to think of himself first and others second. No other incident illustrates this weakness more than the foot washing passage of John 13:1-20. Here Peter is, on the night before Jesus' trial, after three years of discipleship, and he is still struggling with pride. His pride gets in the way again and again. The time for further teaching, further parables, further demonstrations in humility is over. This time Peter will learn by experience . . . direct, painful experience.

Do you recall the other rash statement made by Peter after he and others left with Jesus from the Last Supper and moved across the Kidron Valley toward

the Mount of Olives? Jesus remarks to his disciples that a time is forth coming, not distant in the future, when all of them will fall away from his leadership. It is here, as recorded in Mark's gospel, chapter 14 verse 9 that Peter says, "Everyone else may fall away, but I will not." Another bold, impetuous statement from Simon the Rock. He still thinks himself to be different, that he has no sin; that he is somehow better than the other disciples.

Jesus decides not argue with Peter's sin, Jesus just calmly predicts, "This very night, before the cock crows twice, you will disown me three times." No doubt this was a difficult rebuke for Peter to handle. His pride would have say, "No! Not me Lord!" Verse 31 records, "Even if I must die with you, I will never disown you." And here Peter seems to espouse the belief that he is perfect. Another bold promise seemingly even more foolish even than the first one. How long will it take until Simon will become "The Rock" that Jesus sees in him?

In your journey of faith has there been a moment when you denied or betrayed Christ? Describe your denial, your suffering and any new learnings that came out of this experience for you.

When Peter burst into tears several hours later, he knew that his pride had been destroyed. He had failed his master in his time of need but more that, Peter had failed himself. He had failed to overcome his pride that led him again and again to make bold promises that he couldn't keep. The fact that he denied Jesus is not that important. Jesus knew he was going to do it. The literal incident was not as important as the underlying attitude. Jesus had taught him that much: look for the intentions of the heart. Through his tears Peter looked deep into his own heart. Instead of forgiveness, he saw hatred. Instead of selfless love, he saw a "me first" attitude. Instead of humility he saw pride.

Peter had come to a painful but crucial stage in his journey of faith, he had come face to face with himself, with his own sin and self centered pride. He

cannot go any farther in the way of Christ unless he overcomes his prideful nature. He cannot be a true disciple, and certainly not an Apostle, unless he passes through his own crucifixion and resurrection. The old Peter must die, as surely as Jesus suffered. The old Peter must die, as surely as Jesus died.

In your own journey of faith, has there been a moment when you have come face to face with your own sinful self, with the darkness or evil within you?

SESSION THREE: "FEED MY SHEEP"

Read Mark 16:1-9 and record what transpires:

One of the great mysteries of New Testament scholarship is what happened to the original ending of the Gospel of Mark 16:8. Some later manuscripts add verses 9-19. Neither version is completely satisfactory. Particularly if Mark ends with verse 8, the reader is left hanging. There is no story of Jesus' resurrection appearance to his disciples. There is no story of Jesus commissioning his disciples to "Go unto all the world." Most scholars therefore speculate that the original version of Mark's Gospel had an ending that is now lost. How it got lost and what that ending was like, are questions that we may never fully answer.

Mark is considered to be the first Gospel written. It is also the Gospel that tradition says was based on Peter's personal memories. If this is so, it's all the more unusual that Mark does not have any story of Jesus's resurrection, nor specifically of a post Easter encounter with Peter. The stage is set for such an encounter. Verse 7 says that the angel instructs the three women to tell his disciples and Peter: "He is going on before you into Galilee. . ." Then the narrative ends. . .with no mention of this resurrection appearance in Galilee and for our particular interest, Jesus' first encounter with Peter after Peter's denial.

What would have happened to Peter if Mark's gospel ended with chapter 16 verse 8?

Read John 21:4-7. What happens here?

Let's describe the situation. The angel's message to the visitors at the empty tomb was that resurrected Jesus would meet his disciples in Galilee. Apparently, the remaining eleven disciples only partially believed the message. Surely, they returned to Galilee, but they were at loose ends. They were discouraged, confused, trying to make sense out of all that they had seen and heard in recent days. They returned to fishing. As we examine Peter's journey in faith, it is interesting to note how often dramatic spiritual moments between him and Jesus seem to happen on or near water, and now a resurrection appearance.

Do you have a favorite place, or time when you encounter the Lord?
What makes it special?

After breakfast, Jesus asks Peter a simple, but profound question, "... do you love me more than these?" Enthusiastic, spontaneous Peter answers, "Yes, Lord, you know I love you." Peter must have thought, "How obvious!" But was it really so obvious? Peter denied Jesus... does Peter really love Jesus or just give lip service to his devotion? "If you love me, Peter, then feed my lambs," counters Jesus. Then a second time, Jesus asks the same question, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Notice that Jesus does not use Peter's nickname here. Jesus is hardly addressing a rock. Maybe to, Jesus wants to keep this ceremony formal. Again, Peter responds enthusiastically, "Yes Lord, you know I love." The tension is getting thicker. The other disciples are crowding around staring at Peter and Jesus. "Then feed my sheep" says Jesus. Finally a third time, Jesus

asks his simple question, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" John notes that Peter was hurt that Jesus asked him a third time. I bet he was! The tension must have been thick enough to cut. Three items. Now, it is obvious that Jesus knows that Peter denied him. Now Peter knows that Jesus knows. Peter's only humble response is "Lord, you know everything . . ." Indeed Jesus does know everything about Peter. . "you know I love you." It is as if Peter is saying, "You know that I failed you, Lord. But . . . but still I love you." He might have added, "My love isn't that strong nor very consistent, Lord, but I do love you."

Is every Christian called to be a shepherd and a fisherman? Shepherding involves the nurturing function of the church; fishing involves the mission function of the church. Discuss these complementary functions in your Christian life and in your church life.

Read Acts 4:1-14 and briefly record what happens.

As we turn the pages of Scripture and pass from the gospel narratives into the Acts of the Apostles, we also pass into a new stage in Peter's journey in faith. In the absence of Jesus, Peter begins to take the lead, making decisions, organizing, preaching. Peter experiences a new kind of authority and power that probably even surprised Peter. In short, Peter begins to blossom as a person and as a Christian leader.

Do you feel that you have been called to ministry by God/ If so, what kind of ministry? What are your unique gifts that God will or has utilized in your ministry? Have there been any personal traits that were previously negative that are now helpful in ministry?

SERMON EVALUATION
FOR
SIMON "THE ROCK"

HOW WOULD YOU EVALUATE THE APPEARANCE OF THE MAKEUP,
COSTUMES AND PROPS?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
POOR								EXCELLENT	

HOW WOULD YOU EVALUATE THE SERMON'S CONTENT?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
POOR								EXCELLENT	

WHAT WAS THE QUALITY OF MY DELIVERY?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
POOR								EXCELLENT	

WHAT WAS THE OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS STYLE OF SERMON?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
POOR								EXCELLENT	

HOW OFTEN DO YOU THINK THIS STYLE OF DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE
SERMON COULD BE PREACHED IN THE LOCAL CHURCH?

__WEEKLY __MONTHLY __QUARTERLY __OTHER

WHY?

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

CHAPTER 7: A STUDY OF JOB

SESSION ONE: POINTS AND COUNTERPOINTS

Prologue

- I. Dialogue-Chapters 3-14
 - A. Job's Complaint, Ch. 3
 - B. Eliphaz First Response, Ch. 4&5
 - C. Job's Answer, Ch. 6&7
 - D. Bildad's First Response, Ch. 8
 - E. Job's Answer, Ch. 9&10
 - F. Zophar's First Response, Ch. 11
 - G. Job's Answer, Ch. 12-14
- II. Second Round of Dialogue
 - A. Eliphaz, Ch. 15
 - B. Job, Ch. 16&17
 - C. Bildad, Ch. 18
 - D. Job, Ch. 19
 - E. Zophar, Ch. 20
 - F. Job, Ch. 21
- III. Third Round of Dialogue
 - A. Chapters 22-28
 - B. Job's Final Statement
- IV. Elihu
- V. Theophany
 - A. God speaks, Ch. 38-40:2
 - B. Job, Ch. 40:3-5
 - C. God speaks, Ch. 40:6-41:34
 - D. Job, 42:1-6
- VI. Epilogue

Session Two: Tell Me Why

In the fourth chapter of Job, the dialogues between Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Job begin. Eliphaz leads off cautiously and almost apologetically in his first statement to Job, but quickly turns to criticism of Job for buckling in the face of adversity (4:12-5:7). Using as almost a supernatural prophetic source of his authority, Eliphaz advises Job to turn to God, the powerful and just, who will chasten Job and then restore him.

Job replies that he is justified in his bitterness of complaint because of the intensity of his suffering, and pleads once again as he did in his monologue contained in Chapter 3, for death as a release from his suffering. Job says that his friends have failed to give him moral support and challenges them to prove that he merits so much misfortune.

In Bildad's first speech he says that Job's response to Eliphaz is like so much wind. Bildad asserts God's justice, hence that Job's children received only what they deserved. Job should turn to God and he might be restored, and goes on to endeavor to use history as a proof that the wicked get a short acknowledgment of the confession of their sins and that God always rewards and punishes. Bildad assures Job that justice will prevail.

Job, in his reply to Bildad admits that no man can stand just before God because God puts the issue on the basis of power rather than justice. In verses 22-24, Job claims that God destroys the innocent and guilty alike, mocks the innocent and gives control of the world to the wicked. Life is short and painful; why struggle in vain when one can hope only for condemnation? Job asks for an umpire/arbitrator to assure fairness and to allow Job to speak without fear, for he feels God is oppressing, persecuting, and hunting him. Will God not grant him a brief span of peace before his death?

The first monologue by Zophar accuses Job of bragging about his inno-

cence to silence others. Zophar claims that the truth is that Job is not of pure doctrine and at last the direct charge is made: Job is told that he deserves his misery as a penalty for his guilt. The wicked receive their due.

Job replies in a sarcasm of praise at his friends "wisdom". He is not inferior to them as they have implied, and points to the wealthiness of those who are wicked. All of creation knows that God is in control with wisdom and power. Job will stake his very life on a direct confrontation with God asking only for a just hearing.

In Chapter 3 and in his answer to Eliphaz, Job expresses his feelings honestly, including his very negative responses about life, his friends, and God. Do you think such negative expression is helpful or harmful? Why? Do you find it easy to express yourself like this? Why or why not?

Job asks why people go on living when their life seems so hard and meaningless. A controversial question today is how far doctors and nurses should go in keeping someone alive using life support machines and other extraordinary measures. What is your attitude towards this deliberate extension of life?

In his speeches, Job expresses anger both at his friends and at God. Is this a good thing to do? Have you ever felt angry at God? Under what circumstances? What did you do with your anger? What are some healthy ways of handling our anger?

Job's friends argue logically:

1. All suffering is a punishment for sin.
2. Job is suffering.
3. Therefore Job must have sinned.

Where is the fault in their reasoning?

As we begin the second round of dialogue between Job and his friends we first hear Eliphaz saying, as did Bildad, that Job's speech is hot air. Who does Job think he is? What right does Job have to berate God. No man is clean before God and the wisdom of the ages is that the wicked always suffer.

Job says "I have heard all this before and if the roles were reversed I would probably be saying the same thing to you!" But Job still cries out for vindication. There must be a heavenly witness who will intercede between Job and God. His life is about to end in the midst of mockery with no support from God or friend.

Bildad presents his second monologue with an attitude of resentment at being called "a beast" and stupid. Bildad's response portrays a gloom and doom future for those who are wicked.

Job realizes that he is completely isolated. He is now fully aware of his friends' lack of comprehension for his feelings or position. Job states that if he has erred in his words, they have only to do with him and not an offense toward God or man.

He comes to point where he rises beyond the limits of his present conditions, knows that his vindication will come at the very least after his death and he will God.

Zophar says that he is moved to speak out of his anxious, disturbing thoughts. He says that this seeming rise to triumph of the wicked is only mo-

mentary. No matter how high they rise, they pass away like a dream.

Job now asks of his friends that they pay close attention to what he has to say. He feels that he has some basis for impatience and he asks them to just look at him and be still. He refutes the claims of his friends by pointing to the continued prosperity of the wicked. The reply is that God takes it out on the wicked man's children. Death comes to all people alike, without regard to the life they lead. The wicked escape calamity and go peacefully to the grave. The "comfort" of the friends is vain and their arguments are groundless.

We speak proverbially of the "patience of Job". Does Job appear to be patient? Where does this proverbial picture come?

Job complains that his friends have not been very helpful to him. What mistakes do you think they have made? Have they said or done anything right?

What could you learn from their example that could help you in visiting the sick, bereaved or troubled?

Eliphaz, in his third speech, asserts that God receives no benefit from human virtue. It could hardly be from piety that Job is being judged so it must be that Job's wickedness is great. He proceeds then to charge Job with oppression of the poor, the widowed, and the orphaned. This is the cause of his calamity. He thought God would not see his misdeeds, and disaster inevitability followed. Return to God, however, will bring restoration of good fortune.

Job continues in his extremity to search for God, so that he may come into

court with him. But he cannot find him. God knows Job is innocent but he does as he pleases and uses terror against him. God's purposes are hidden and even the pious cannot know them. (Biblical scholars suggest to us that vs. 18-24 have been corrupted in translation and probably belong in the mouth of one of the friends rather than that of Job.)

Chapters 24-27, according to many Biblical scholars, are thoroughly scrambled. Bildad's third speech is short and seemingly out of keeping with his previous positions. Job's reply consists of the very ideas that he has been so vigorously opposing. Zophar's third speech is missing altogether. At least some Biblical scholars would suggest that the following rearrangement of chapter and verses makes some sense of the final round of dialogues.

Bildad's third speech (25:1;27:7-10, 16-23) as reconstituted, declares that wealth will not save the wicked from punishment.

Job's reply (26:1-4, 27:11-12; 25:2-6; 26:5-14) consists of mainly of a description of God's power.

Zophar's missing speech (27:13; 24:21-24, 18-20;27:14-15) reaffirms the certainty of the punishment of the wicked.

Job's final speech of the dialogue confirms his innocence and gives a nostalgic review of his former blessed state when he was under divine favor, happy, prosperous, respected, praised as a benefactor of the poor, a champion of justice, who confidently looked forward to a long and happy life. This is contrasted with his present misery, derided by young upstarts, spit on by the dregs of society, racked by a painful and loathsome disease. Job now makes a series of confessions of horrible self-imprecations if ever he committed such wrongs as to lust after a maiden; attain wealth by injustice, commit adultery; mistreat his slaves, withhold charity from the poor, the widow, the orphan; put his trust in riches; worship the sun and moon; rejoice at his enemies misfortune; put a

stranger into the street; or abuse his land and tenants. Here Job rests his case, affixes his signature and challenges God to answer him.

In 23:2 Job asks, "How I wish I knew where to find God!" If someone came to you today and asked "How can I find God?" How would you answer?

Job 28 is a hymn in praise of wisdom. What are some sources to which people look for wisdom today? When you are searching for wisdom for your life, to which people or sources do you go?

How does God fit into your search for wisdom?

SESSION THREE: POETRY AND THEOPHANY

In the thirty-second chapter of Job we see the introduction of a young man named Elihu, who seems to have been listening to the dialogue and debate that has taken place between Job and his three friends. The young man intervenes out of a sense of anger at Job's apparent self-righteousness and the failure of his three friends to confute him.

Elihu goes on to speak to Job in four separate poems and a short final admonition. He introduces his first poem in a prose fashion and apologizes for his apparent brashness and youth. He assures Job that he is a man, just as himself and that he and Job can dialogue on equal terms, as Job has said repeatedly he wishes to with God. Elihu endeavors to summarize Job's argument in the following manner: Job contends that he is innocent and yet God refuses to answer his complaint and rather persecutes him. Elihu's rebuttal to Job's complaint is that God does answer us in a variety of ways, perhaps by dreams or an illness. It is Elihu's contention that God redeems humanity time after time. Unless Job has an appropriate and cogent answer, he would be advised to remain silent and let Elihu continue in his instruction.

This gives rise to the second poem of Elihu, in which he charges Job with blasphemy and admonishes him for questioning the justice and manner in which it is administered by God. The point that God is just and rewards and punishes is not new Elihu, it is a repetition of that which has been set forth in the previous dialogue with the three friends.

Elihu's third poem focuses in on the theme of God's independence from humanity. It is Elihu's contention that there is a very understandable reason why God chooses to ignore the petition of a man: it is because God recognizes the insincerity and unfaithfulness on the part of the petitioner.

Elihu's fourth poem is considered by some to be divided at verse 25/26

into actually two poems. It is in the corpus of verses that we find Elihu continuing in his defense of God's justice and application thereof. No person, ruler or peasant is immune to this system of divine reward or punishment. Affliction has a purpose and humanity would be well advised to contemplate the works of the one who has made all nature and to give God praise. God's purpose and benevolence can easily be seen in the changing of the seasons.

Elihu's final admonition is found in 37:23-34, where he again admonishes his elder to not be caught up in an attitude of too much self righteousness or to thing himself wiser than God.

What new idea does Elihu add to the discussion on suffering? If you were Job, how would you react to him?

According to Elihu, God speaks to us through dreams and through sickness. Do you agree? Has this happened to you?

Elihu said that God sends suffering to teach people, that suffering has a disciplinary value. Can you think of other situations in which this explanation does not fit? Do you think you have learned anything from suffering? Explain what you have learned.

Job and his friends have debated his case. Job has longed to meet God so he can argue his case before him. Job has hurled his "Why?" at God. Now God speaks! The theophany, divine appearance, of God is contained in 38:1-40:2 and beginning again at 40:6 continuing to 41:34. Nestled between these two discourses and following the second are responses by our friend Job.

In the first discourse, God asks Job why he speaks in ignorance. God questions Job as to his knowledge of creation, of time, of the weather and of the

constellations. He asks him if he is capable of providing for the physical needs of a variety of birds and animals. Does he know the intricate details of the recreation process. God challenges Job to reply, but Job in his inadequacy, promises to say no more about such things.

In the second discourse, God again challenges Job to show that Job has a power equal to that of God. The central theme seems to be that self righteousness leads humanity to condemn God. The verses that follow provide a portrait of two large and mythically symbolic animals, the Behemoth, and Leviathan.

Job was looking for answers to his questions; what does God do instead of providing answers? Why do you think God chooses not to deal with Job's questions?

How was the suffering of Jesus like Job's? How was it different? What is the relationship between the suffering of Jesus and the suffering of the believer?

Refer to the following scripture passages:

2 Corinthians 1:5-7

Philippians 3:10-11

Colossians 1:24

I Peter 2:21-23

The closing portion of Job's story, the epilogue, is contained in 42:7-17. In this passage that is a few words, we find a vast amount of information. God rebukes Eliphaz and his two friends for they have not spoken correctly regarding God to God's servant Job, and he instructs them to make appropriate offerings and sacrifices as a burnt offering and to request that Job would engage in intercessory prayer on their behalf, for God says that their prayer will not be acceptable. God now restores the fortunes of Job, giving to him twice as much property as he has lost. His relatives return to his side to celebrate and break bread with him and bestow upon him their words of sympathy as well as their gifts.

Job's family is restored as well with the birth of seven sons and three daughters, whose physical beauty is beyond compare to any other in the land. It seems significant to note that contrary to the tradition of their culture, Job grants unto his daughters an inheritance equal to their brothers. After this has taken place, Job continues to live for 140 years and dies a contented, elderly man. Why does God restore Job's fortune? How has Job been inwardly changed?

Does the book of Job answer the question "Why do good people suffer?" If not what assurance does it give us in the midst of our suffering?

How have your thoughts about the problem of suffering been clarified or changed by your study of the book of Job?

CHAPTER 8: A STUDY OF AMOS

OUTLINE

- I. Introduction - Chapter 1:1-2
- II. First Section - Chapter 1:3 - 2:16
 - Eight oracles against:

1. Damascus	5. Moab
2. Gaza	6. Judah
3. Tyre	7. Israel
4. Ammonites	8. Amorite
- III. Second Section - Chapters 3 - 6
 - Words of the Lord spoken against:
 - 1. Israel
 - 2. Bashan
 - 3. Israel
 - 4. Zion
- IV. Third Section - Chapter 7:1 - 9:8
 - Four Visions of Amos
 - 1. Judgement by locusts
 - 2. Judgement by fire
 - 3. A basket of ripe summer fruit - the immediacy of Israel's end
 - 4. The thresholds shake
- V. The encounter between Amos and Amazi'ah
 - Chapter 7:10 - 17
- VI. The ending - Chapter 9:11-15

SESSION ONE: Who and Where?

During the long and peaceful reign of Jeroboam II (786-746 B.C.) Israel attained a height of territorial expansion and national prosperity never again reached. The military security and economic affluence which characterized this age were taken by many Israelites as signs of the Lord's special favor toward them, which they felt they deserved because of their extravagant support of the official shrines.

Into this scene stepped the prophet Amos, probably sometime during the decade 760-750 B.C. A native of the small Judean village of Tekoa, he was called by God from a shepherd's task to the difficult mission of preaching harsh words in a smooth season. He denounced Israel, as well as her neighbors, for reliance upon military might, and for grave injustice in social dealings, abhorrent immorality, and shallow, meaningless piety. Amos' forceful, uncompromising preaching brought him into conflict with the religious authorities of his day. His personal confrontation with the priest Amaziah remains one of the unforgettable scenes in Hebrew prophecy.

Expelled from the royal sanctuary at Bethel and commanded not to prophesy there again, Amos probably returned to Judah and wrote down the essence of his public preaching in substantially its present form. Amos became the first in a brilliant succession of writing prophets whose words have left their indelible stamp on later thought about God and humanity.

Taken from the introduction to the Book of Amos, The New Oxford Annotated Bible, R.S.V.

Session Two: Oracles, Judgements and Visions

Beginning in Chapter 1, verse two, Amos lists eight nations against whom God's wrath is to be levied. Following each of the cities names, give a brief explanation as to their sin and punishment.

Damascus:

Gaza:

Tyre:

Ammonites:

Moab:

Judah:

Israel:

Ammorite:

In the second section of the book of Amos, the themes that have been outlined in Chapters one and two are developed in greater detail. Amos goes on to speak Words of the Lord that are to be spoken against Israel, Bashan, Israel and Zion. Read Chapters three through six and then consider the following questions: In Amos' words of judgement, why do you think he spoke so boldly to the people?

Imagine yourself to be a contemporary of the prophet Amos, and that the Words of the Lord are to be spoken by you to the local church or to the church at large. Identify some actions or attitudes that you want to address. Now write two or three paragraphs that will represent your "Words of the Lord" to the church.

CHAPTER 9: A STUDY OF PAUL

SESSION ONE: SAUL MEETS JESUS

We first meet Saul, whose name was later changed to Paul, in Acts 7, as he witnesses the death of Stephen by stoning. Stephen was a leader in the early church.

READ ACTS 7:54-8:3.

What effect did Stephen's death seem to have on Saul?

READ ACTS 9:1-19a.

What was still Saul's purpose? Read ahead in Acts 26:9-11 for Paul's own statement about the intensity of his opposition to Christians.

In what dramatic way did God get Saul's attention? In harassing the Christians, who had Saul really been persecuting? What did Jesus tell Saul to do?

How did this encounter affect Saul physically? How did it affect his traveling companions? Why do you think Jesus chose to meet Saul in such a dramatic way?

What words would you use to describe Ananias? What job did the Lord assign him? Why did he hesitate? What reassured him? How did his obedience demonstrate his faith?

What did the Lord reveal about Saul's destiny? What was Saul's attitude as he waited to hear from God? In your own words, describe what happened to him when he met Ananias.

Saul had erected a barrier of hostility against Christians. Ananias had a wall of fear. How did Jesus Christ remove both barriers? What kinds of walls do we build between ourselves and others? How can Jesus remove these walls and give us the same kind of close fellowship experienced by Saul and Ananias?

READ ACTS 9:19b-31

Contrast Saul in verse 1 with Saul in verses 20-22, 27. Why would preaching in the synagogue demand courage? How did Saul identify Jesus to the people?

How disturbing was Saul's preaching to the Jews? How was the Lord's prediction of verse 16 beginning to be fulfilled? Why do you think God's purposes for Saul included suffering?

Why were the Jerusalem believers hesitant to accept Saul? Suppose your parent or sibling had been one of those previously seized by Saul, imprisoned, and perhaps put to death. How would you feel if he wanted to join your fellowship of Christians? What would you suspect?

Who bridged the gap? Read Acts 4:36. How was Barnabas living out the meaning of his name?

Read the summary statement made about the church in verse 31. How successful had its enemies been in stamping out Christianity? How is the story of Saul and the church an encouragement to Christians today who are persecuted for their faith?

SESSION TWO: PREACHING AND PERSECUTION -- ACTS 14

READ ACTS 14:1-7

In what ways were the apostles' ministry and experience in Iconium similar to that of Antioch of Pisidia? What was the tactic of the unbelieving Jews? How did the apostles show they were not intimidated? How did God back them up?

When they got wind of a plot against them, where did the apostles go? (consult map) What did they keep doing as they traveled?

READ ACTS 14:8-18

Besides his physical need, what did Paul see in the crippled man? How did the crowds respond to the miracle? With what frantic action and message did Paul and Barnabas try to stop the people?

How might any pagan people, such as these who did not have the Old Testament Scriptures, become aware of the true God?

READ ACTS 14:19-28

Why did the people of Lystra completely reverse their attitude toward Paul and Barnabas? Why do you think they could not kill Paul? Why did Paul and Barnabas return to the places where they had been mistreated?

Outline the steps of their follow up program (verses 21-23) How did they insure that the work would continue?

Their prayer was often accompanied by fasting. What does fasting accomplish? What does fasting emphasize to you? What does it mean to God?

Trace on the map all of Paul's and Barnabas's movements in this chapter. Why did they return to Antioch? How well had they done their job? What did they emphasize in their report?

What do you think were the highlights of this first missionary journey? Review the ways God used Paul and Barnabas and helped them. How can this both challenge and encourage each of us?

SESSION THREE: PAUL THE PHILOSOPHER -- ACTS 17

READ ACTS 17:1-15.

What was Paul's pattern of preaching and the content of his message? Who were convinced by the force of the truth?

Why would the unbelieving Jews incite a riot? What unintentional compliment did they give the disciples (verse 6)? What falsehood did they spread? With what was Jason charged? How did the city authorities handle the case?

How were the Berean people and their reactions similar to those in Thessalonica? How were they different?

Who became hostile and why (verse 13)? What role did Paul's brothers in Christ play both in Thessalonica and Berea (verses 10, 14)?

READ ACTS 17:16-34

What bothered Paul about Athens? What bothered the philosophers about Paul? What did he emphasize in his preaching?

What common ground did Paul establish with his listeners? How did Paul describe God and his relationship to humankind?

In what specific ways has God involved God's self with people? Why? How had the Athenians groped for God? How near is God to every person?

If God is so near in an involvement with people all through history, why has God been missed? As individuals limit their image of God to something they themselves create, how does this insult both God and humankind? What forms of idolatry do people engage in today? Why do people want to worship something less than the true and living God?

Why do people need to repent? Who is going to judge all humankind? What credentials does this judge have?

In what three ways did the Athenians react to Paul's message? How do people today display these same responses? What was the primary hindrance for those who did not believe?

Imagine you are Dionysius or Damaris. How would you have summarized the events of the day for your family when you got home that night?

APPENDIX

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE FOR KEARNEY, NEBRASKA

ZIP CODE 68847
1986 POPULATION 28,328

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
1980 15,647
1986 24,522
1991 28,725

1986 AGE DISTRIBUTION

	%
0-4	8.4
5-11	10.2
12-17	7.2
18-24	17.5
25-34	21.8
35-44	11.9
45-54	6.4
55-64	6.6
65+	10.0

% Annual Growth Rate 80-86	7.8
National Centile 1986	55
Centile within State 1986	70
Avg. Household Income 1986	28,547
Avg. Household Size 1986	2.6
Avg. Family Size 1986	3.1
Number of Families 1986	6,798
Per Capita Income 1986	10,090
% Pop. in Poverty 1980	9.4
% Pop. in Group Quarters 1980	9.5

MEDIAN AGE

1980	24.7
1986	27.5
1991	30.5

EDUCATION

Median Years of Education 1980	12.8
% College Grads 1980	22.7

RACE

	%
White 1980	98.1
1986	98.0
1991	97.9
Black 1980	0.2
1986	0.2
1991	0.2

EMPLOYMENT PROFILE

% White Collar 1980	51.0
% Women in Labor Force 1980	58.2
Average Travel Time to Work 1980	13.5
% Unemployment 1980	4.1
Employment/Pop. Ratio (%) 1980	64.4
Number of Firms 1984	928
Est. Employment 1984	12,474

POPULATION

1970	21,998
1980	25,432
1986	28,328
1991	29,397
% Annual Growth Rate 80-91	1.3

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS

1980	8,853
1986	10,045
1991	10,526
% Annual Growth 80-91	1.6

DISTRIBUTION OF 1986 HOUSEHOLDS
BY INCOME

	%
Less than \$10,000	17.1
\$10,000-\$14,999	11.6
\$15,000-\$24,999	22.4
\$25,000-\$34,999	19.6
\$35,000-\$49,999	16.4
\$50,000-\$74,999	8.5
\$75,000 or more	4.4

HOUSING UNITS

	%
Owner occupied	61.5
Renter occupied	38.5
Condo occupied	0.5

TABLE 1
ECONOMIC INDICATORS FOR CENTRAL NEBRASKA COMMUNITIES

County	City	City Population (1980)	County Population (1980)	Rank via Indicator of Economic Health (1977)	Retail Intensity Ratio (1972)	Distributive Nodality (1974)
Adams	Hastings	23,045	30,656	11th (very good)	1.20	strong
Buffalo	Kearney	21,158	34,797	17th (good)	1.18	moderately strong
Dawson	Lexington	7,040	22,162	17th (good)	1.10	weak
Hall	Grand Island	33,180	47,690	22nd (good)	1.41	strong
Phelps	Holdrege	5,624	9,769	15th (very good)	1.14	moderately strong
—	—	—	—	(Range 93 to 1)	(Range .14 to 1.41)	(Range weak to strong)

Source: *Economic Atlas of Nebraska*, Richard E. Lonsdale, ed., University of Nebraska Press, 1977.

TABLE 2
SELECTED RETAIL CHARACTERISTICS, 1972-1982¹

	City of Kearney ²	Buffalo County	Nebraska
Number of establishments ³			
1972	291	431	16,918
1977	274	383	15,249
1982	294	413	16,402
% change: 1972-77	- 5.8	- 11.1	- 9.9
1977-82	+7.3	+7.8	+7.6
1972-82	+1.0	- 4.2	- 3.1
Number of GAF establishments ⁴ (with payrolls)			
1972	50	66	2,399
1977	50	67	2,626
1982	60	54	2,001
% change: 1972-77	0.0	+1.5	+9.5
1977-82	+20.0	- 19.4	- 23.8
1972-82	+20.0	- 18.2	- 16.6
Sales (in \$1,000) ⁵			
1972	64,112	76,860	3,194,586
1977	111,557	126,066	4,963,422
1982	168,910	185,108	6,774,893
% change: 1972-77	+74.0	+64.0	+55.4
1977-82	+51.4	+46.8	+36.5
1972-82	+163.5	+140.8	+112.1
Number of employees			
1972	1,839	2,192	86,787
1977	2,229	2,572	103,136
1982	2,896	3,172	105,492
% change: 1972-77	+21.2	+17.3	+18.8
1977-82	+29.9	+23.3	+2.3
1972-82	+57.5	+44.7	+21.6

¹ The 1982 figures were unavailable at the time of the Kearney study; release was November, 1984.

² Data not available separately for the Kearney Central Business District.

³ Several changes have occurred in the method of compiling data for the Census of Retail Trade. Most important of these is the separate enumeration of space leased from department stores, resulting in the inflation of 1982 figures as compared to 1977.

⁴ GAF includes three categories of establishments: General merchandise group stores, Apparel and accessory stores, and Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.

⁵ Data are not adjusted for the 1972 to 1982 inflation rate of 130.3 percent.

Source: *Census of Retail Trade* for 1972, 1977, and 1982, U.S. Department of Commerce.

KEARNEY

January, 1988

NEBRASKA COMMUNITY PROFILE

POPULATION

	1970	1980	1987
City	19,181	21,158	23,780
County	31,222	34,797	37,940

BUFFALO COUNTY*

Age	18-24	25-45	46-54
Male	3,451	4,346	1,360
Female	4,028	4,231	1,393
Total	7,479	8,577	2,753

*1980 Census

LABOR

Hourly wage rates in manufacturing occupations (production and/or clerical).

Job Title	Min.	Avg.	Max.
Assembler	\$3.55	\$6.00	\$ 9.30
Cutter Machine Oper.	4.00	5.00	6.00
Lathe Operator	4.75	6.50	8.10
Metal Machine Oper.	4.00	5.80	8.00
Milling Machine Oper.	3.80	6.30	8.40
Punch Press Operator	4.00	5.50	9.00
Radial Drill Press Oper.	4.10	6.30	9.00
Tool & Die Maker	6.00	8.00	10.00
Welder, Arc	4.00	5.25	7.50

% of Manufacturing labor force unionized: less than 9%.
Work stoppages in past two years: none.

Buffalo County Labor Data:

Labor Force	19,345
Unemployed	893
Unemployed as % of Labor Force	4.6
Total Employment	18,452
Agricultural Employment	1,758
Non agricultural Employment	16,694

December, 1986 annual average from Nebraska Department of Labor.

MAJOR EMPLOYERS (100 Employees Minimum)

1. Kearney State College	Education	1275*
2. Eaton Corporation	Manufacturing – valves/ gears	699
3. Baldwin Filters	Manufacturing – oil, air filters	673
4. Good Samaritan Hospital	Medical	630
5. Kearney Public Schools	Education	436
6. Coleman Powermate	Manufacturing – generators	330
7. West Company	Manf. – pharmaceutical closures and stoppers.	308
8. Gibbon Packing (Gibbon, NE)	Meat processing	225
9. Nebraska Turkey Growers	Meat processing	170
10. Buffalo County	Government.	156
11. City of Kearney	Government.	152
12. Richard Young Psychiatric Hosp.	Medical	120

*Includes 715 part-time employees.

LOCATION

Distance in miles from:

Chicago	645	Los Angeles	1,418
Dallas	689	New York	1,437
Denver	359	Kansas City	343



TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Motor Carrier

Highway bus service available: ☒ yes ☐ no
 Number highways servicing city: Federal 2 State 1
 City within 1 miles of interstate highway interchange:
☒ yes ☐ no
 Name(s) of nearest interstate: I-80
 Distance to nearest interstate interchange: 0 miles
 Motor freight carriers serving community:
 Interstate carriers: 4
 Intrastate carriers: 3

Time in transit for carload or truckload lots to:

City	Days by Railroad	Days by Motor Freight
Chicago	3	1
Dallas	4	1
Denver	2	1
Kansas City	1½	1
Los Angeles	5	3
Minneapolis	2½	1
New York	4	4
St. Louis	4	1

Air

Distance to nearest public airport: 3 miles
 Type of runway: ☐ sod ☒ hard surface
 Length of longest runway: 7,200 feet
 Runway lighted: ☒ yes ☐ no
 Private aircraft storage available: ☒ yes ☐ no
 Private aircraft maintenance available: ☒ yes ☐ no
 Distance to nearest commercial air transportation:
3 miles
 Name(s) of airline(s) serving point: GP Express Airlines

Rail

Community served by railroad(s): ☒ yes ☐ no
 In town loading point available: ☒ yes ☐ no
 Number of freight train trips per day: 35
 Functional piggy back ramp available: ☐ yes ☒ no
 Distance to nearest piggy back service: 42 miles
 Name(s) of railroad(s): Union Pacific
Burlington Northern

MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Type of local government: Council-City Manager
 Comprehensive City Plan: ☒ completed, date 1977
☐ underway ☐ under consideration
 City zoning ordinance in effect: ☒ yes ☐ no
 County zoning ordinance in effect: ☒ yes ☐ no

(continued in next column)

MUNICIPAL SERVICES (continued)

Number full-time fire department personnel: 3
 Number volunteer fire department personnel: 75
 Fire insurance class: In City 6 Outside City A8
 Number of full-time city policemen: 32
 City Engineer: city employee ☒ consultant ☐
 Garbage service provided: public ☒ private ☐
 Public Library in city: ☒ yes ☐ no
 Percent of city streets paved: 90%

UTILITIES

Electricity

Supplier: Nebraska Public Power District
 KW peak demand: 45,220
 Additional source: Nebraska Grid System

Natural Gas

Natural gas service available: ☒ yes ☐ no
 Supplier: Northwestern Public Service Company

Water

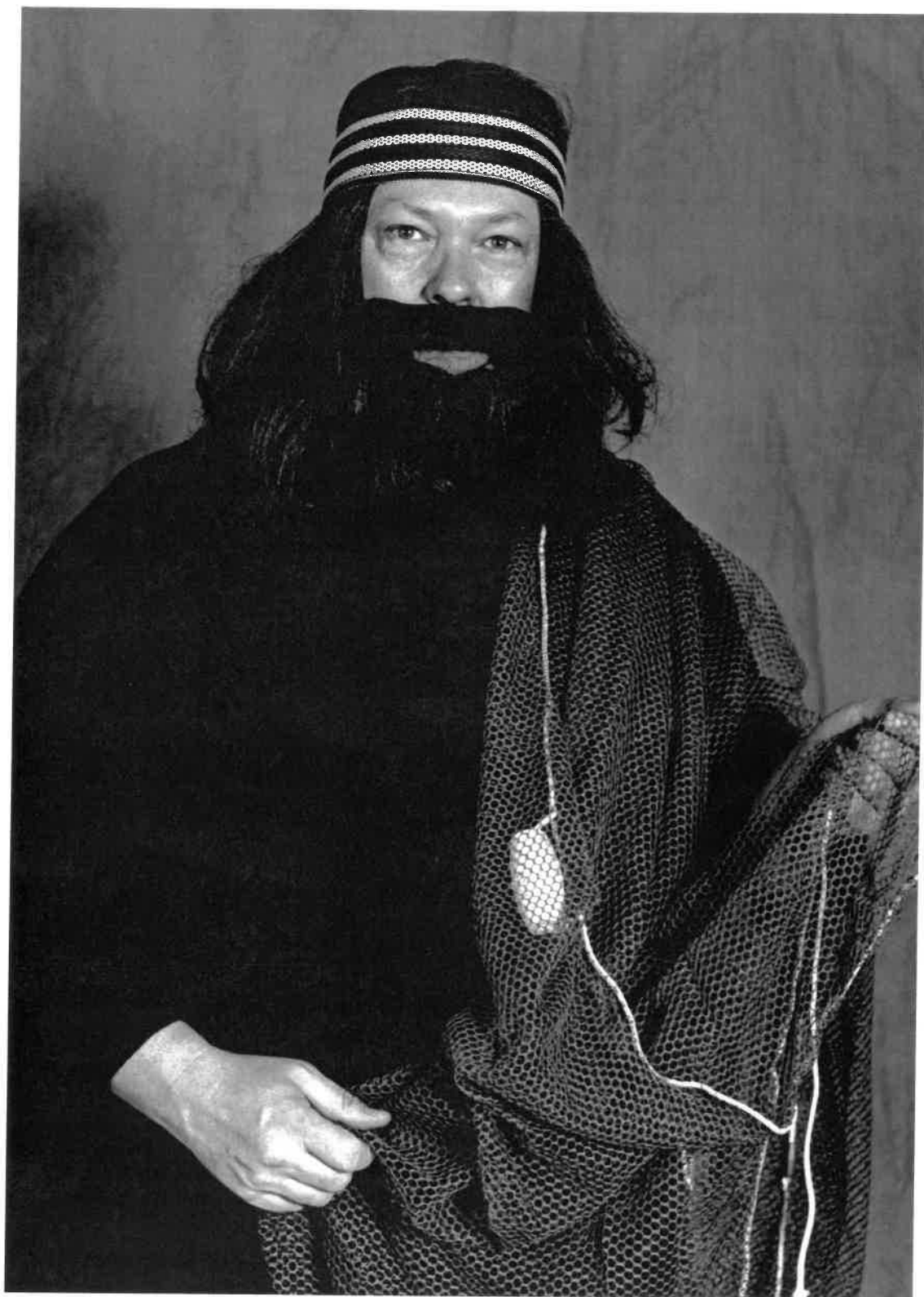
Water supplied by: ☒ municipal ☐ private
 Name of supplier: City of Kearney
 Source of city water: ☐ lake(s) or reservoirs
☐ river ☒ well(s) - Number of wells: 20
 Average depth of wells: 55 Feet
 Capacity of water plant: 15,000 gals./min.
 Average consumption: 5,200,000 gals./day
 Peak consumption: 15,304,000 gals./day
 Storage Capacity: 2,750,000 gals.
 Temperature range: 51°

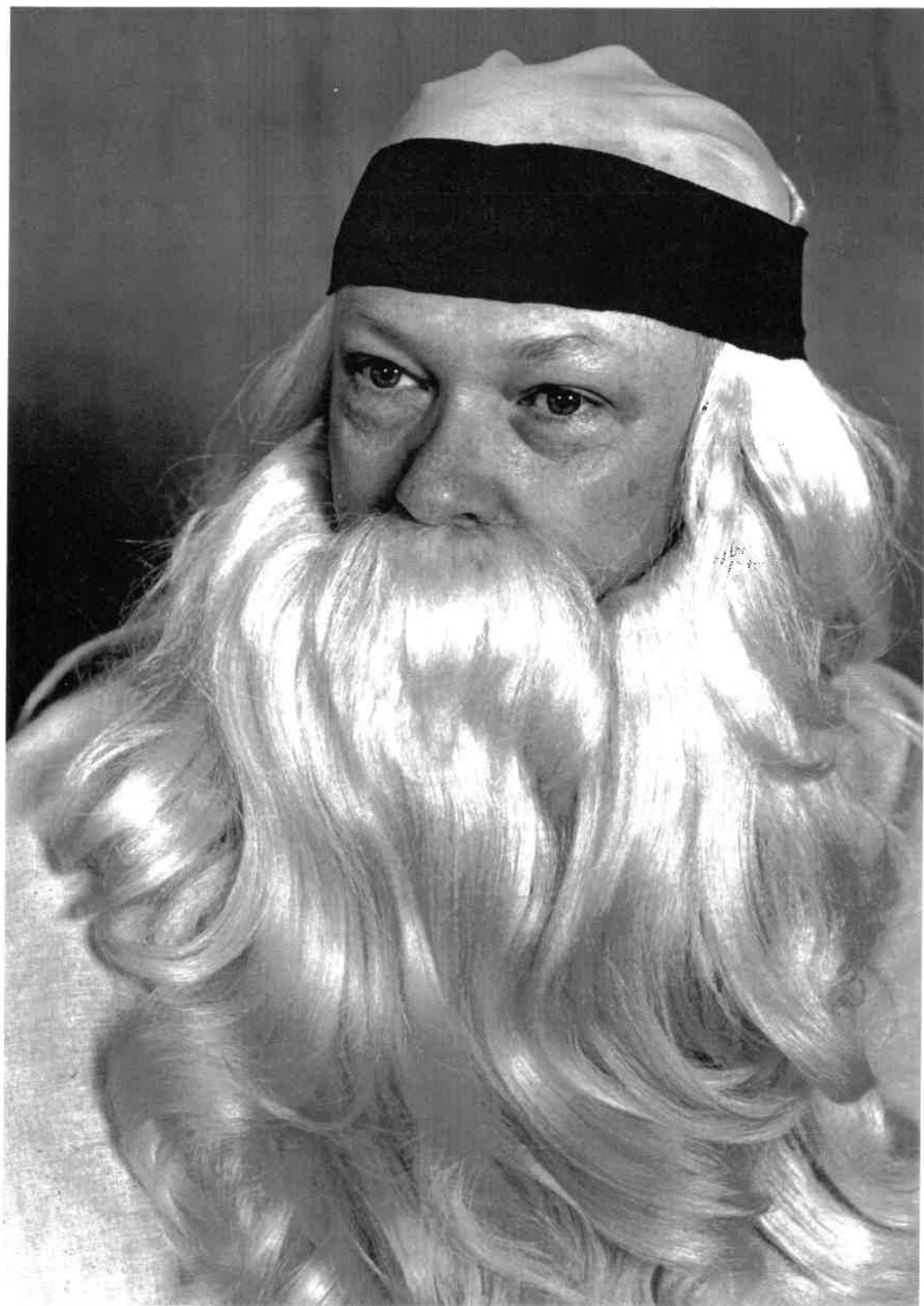
Sanitation

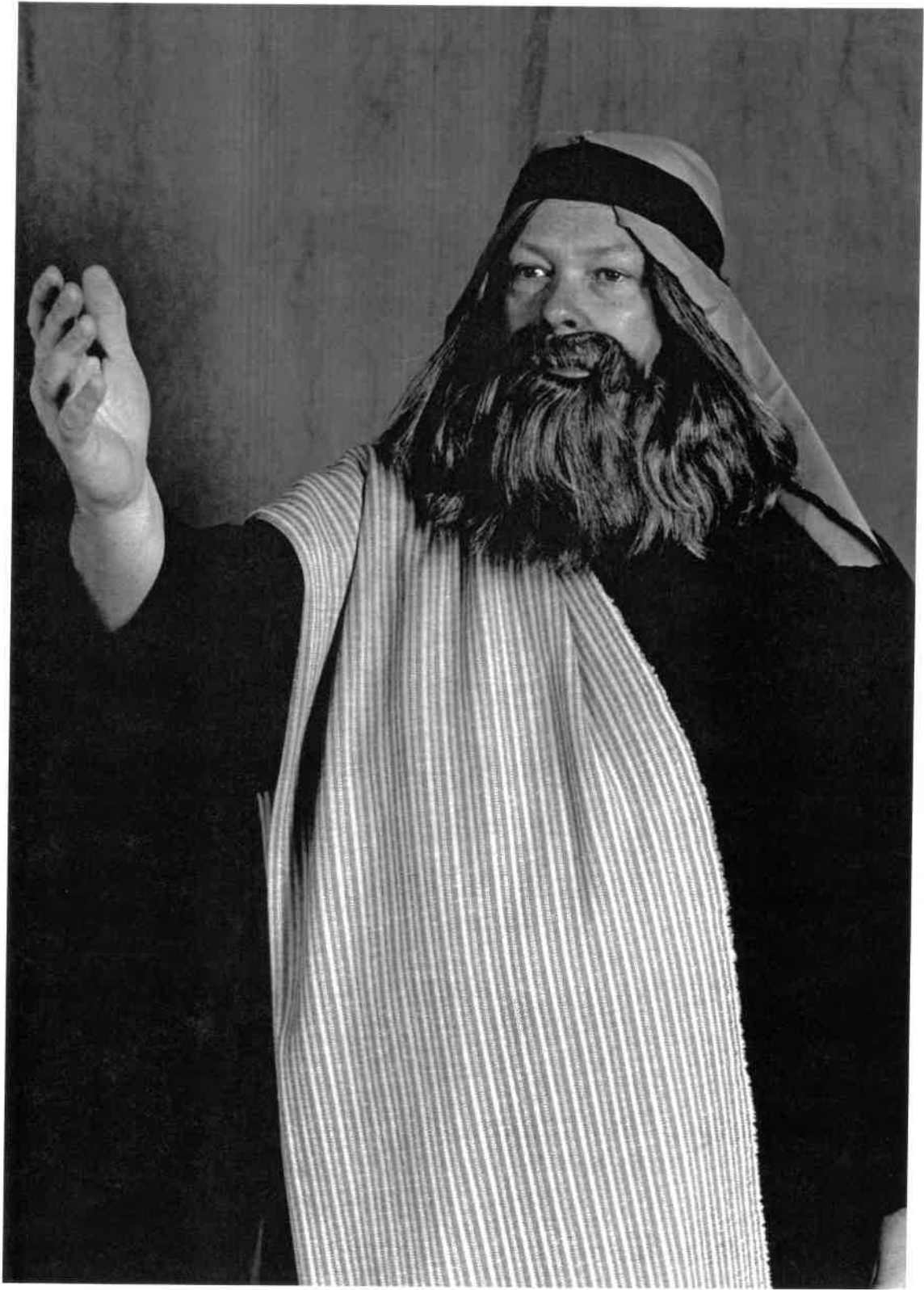
Type of sewage treatment plant: secondary
 Capacity: 3,000,000 gals./day
 Present load: 2,200,000 gals./day
 Sewer use charge: ☒ yes ☐ no

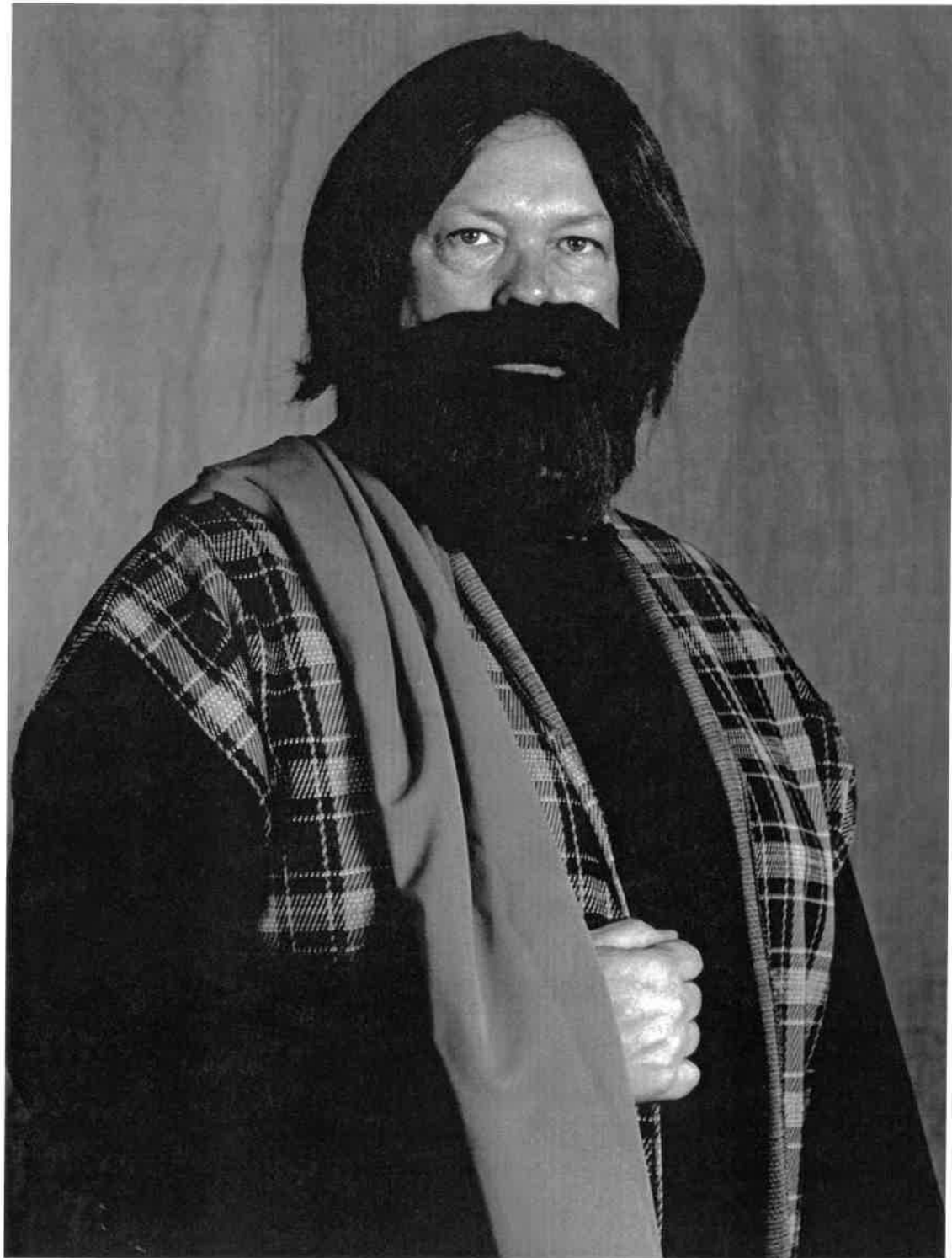
TAX STRUCTURE*

Actual valuation of city: \$385,465,483
 Tax Rate (per \$100 of actual value):
 City4812
 County3584
 School 1.5897
 Other1842
 Total 2.6135
 Bonded Indebtedness: Gen. Obligation \$7,035,000
Revenue \$6,275,000
 *1987

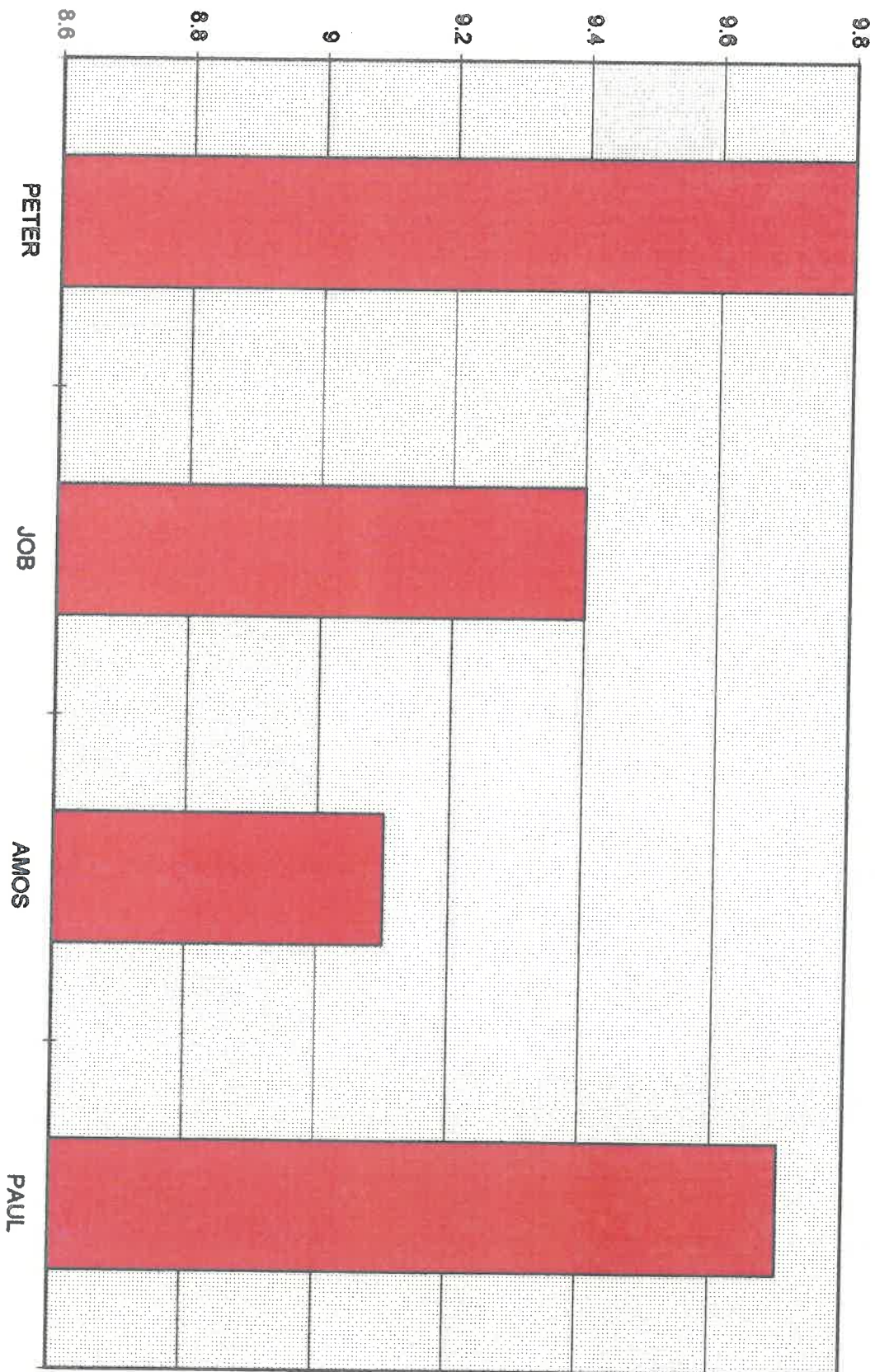




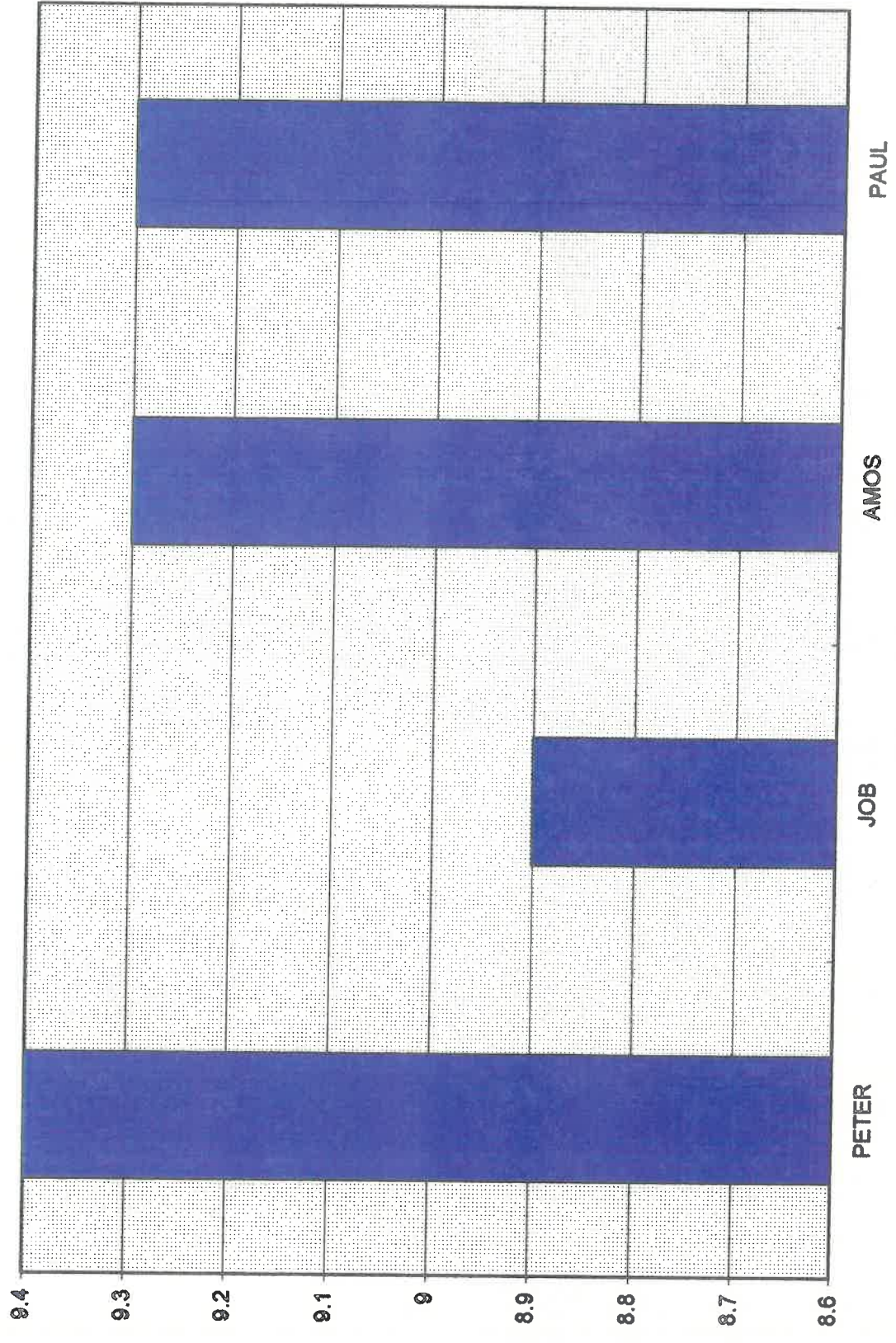




CONTENT



MAKE UP



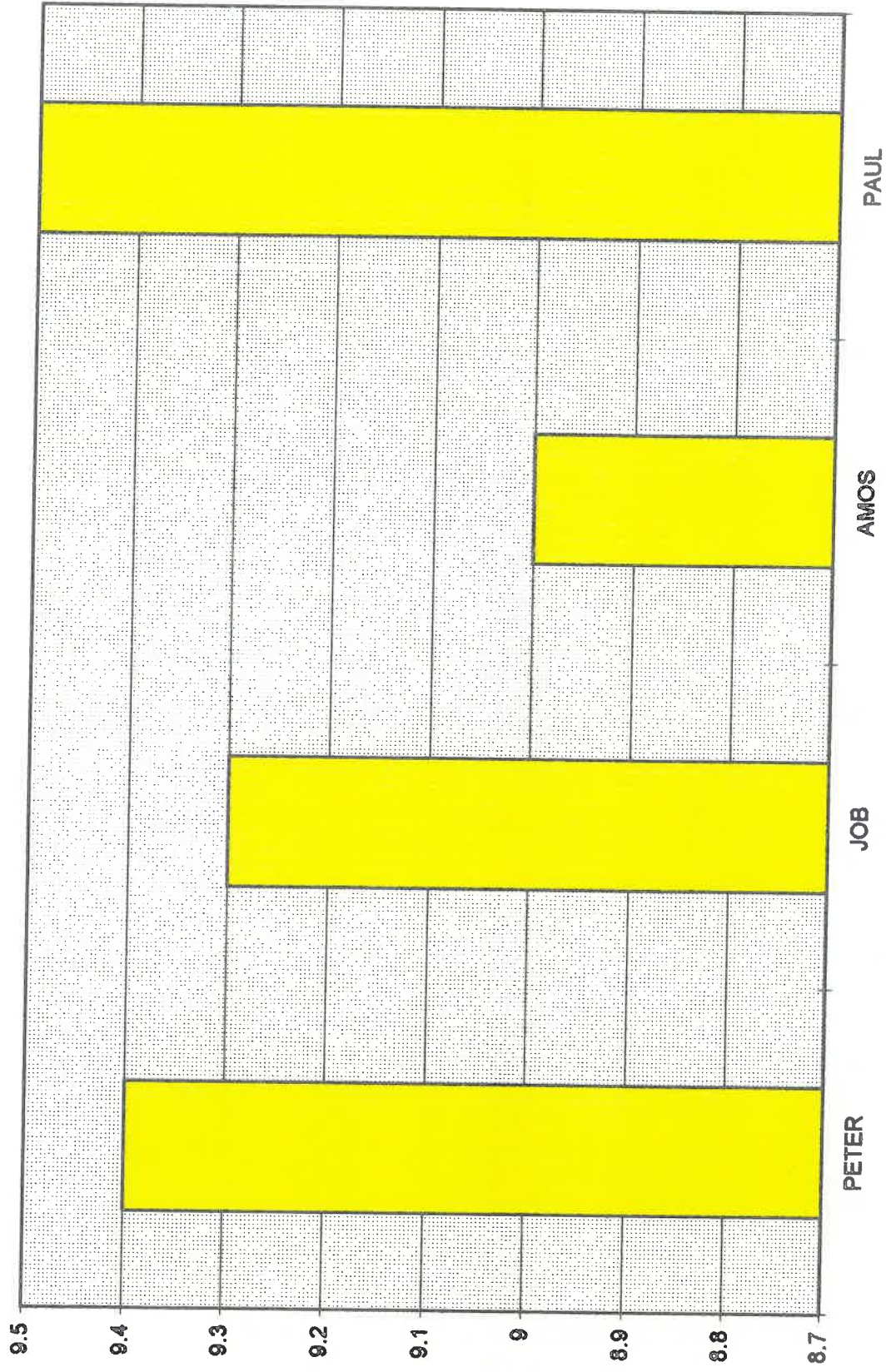
DELIVERY



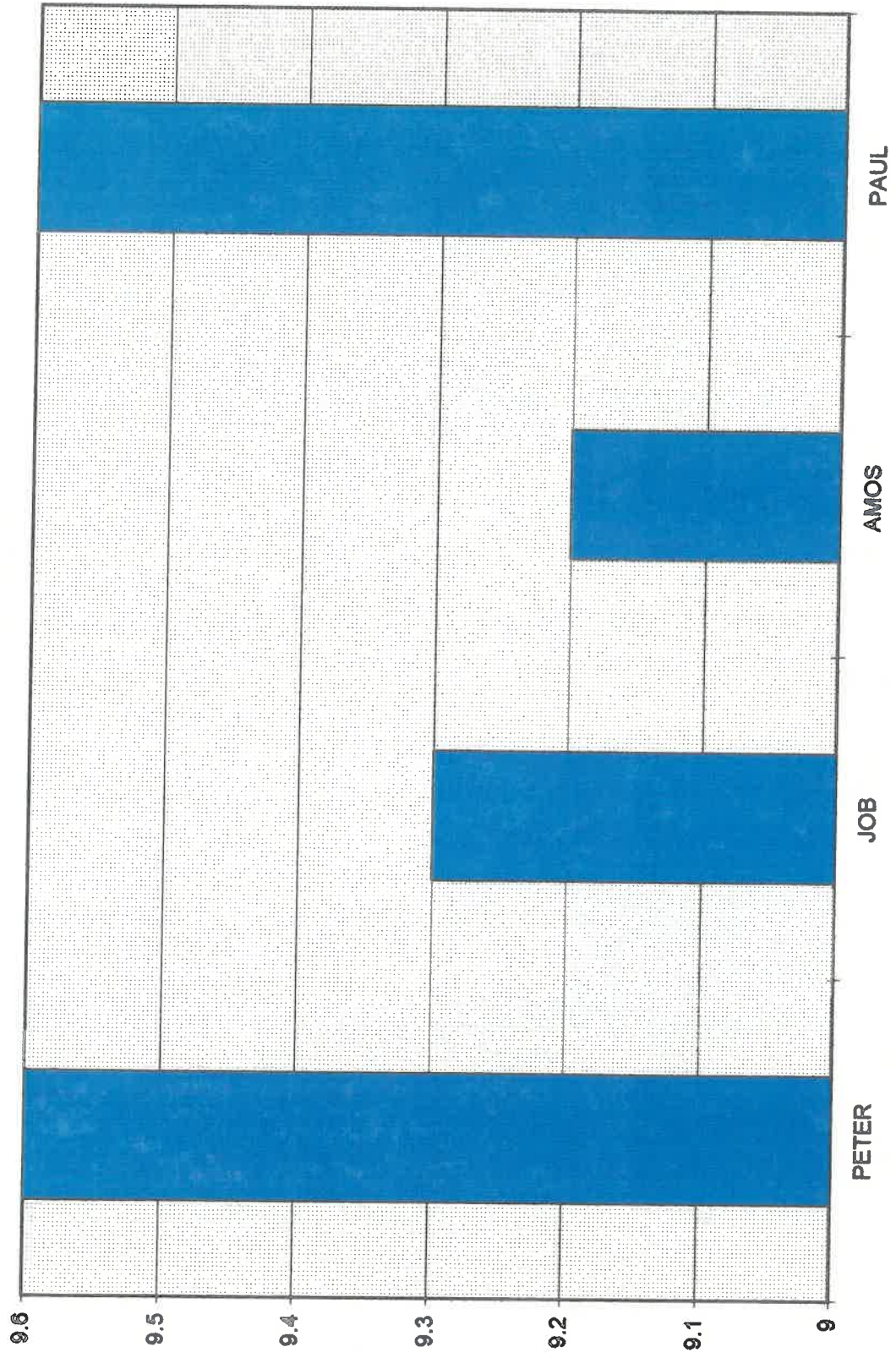
OVER ALL EFFECTIVENESS



OVER ALL EFFECTIVENESS



AVERAGE



MAKE UP

	SCORE
PETER	9.4
JOB	8.9
AMOS	9.3
PAUL	9.3

CONTENT

	SCORE
PETER	9.8
JOB	9.4
AMOS	9.1
PAUL	9.7

AVERAGE

	SCORE
PETER	9.6
JOB	9.3
AMOS	9.2
PAUL	9.6

OVER ALL EFFECTIVENESS

	SCORE
PETER	9.4
JOB	9.3
AMOS	9
PAUL	9.5

DELIVERY

	SCORE
PETER	9.7
JOB	9.5
AMOS	9.6
PAUL	9.8

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRINT RESOURCES

Achtemeier, Elizabeth. Creative Preaching, Find the Words. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980.

The author pulls together the traditional areas of preaching as well as the newer styles of dialogue and drama.

Bartow, Charles L. The Preaching Moment. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980.

Bartow blends together the practical, theoretical, and theological in this review of the basic techniques of preaching.

Bausch, William J. Storytelling, Imagination and Faith. Mystic, CN: Twenty-third Publications, 1984.

A book both of stories and about storytelling.

Boomershine, Thomas E. Story Journey, An Invitation to the Gospel as Storytelling. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988.

This cassette/pamphlet is an experiential entry into the techniques and value of Biblical narrative. It is designed to enable the hearer/reader to become personally involved in the oral tradition.

Boomershine, Thomas E. "Mark, the Storyteller: A Rhetorical-Critical Investigation of Mark's Passion and Resurrection Narrative." Ph. D. diss., Union Theological Seminary, 1974.

A study of the oral characteristics of the Gospel of Mark, especially the passion and resurrection narratives.

Browne, R. E. The Ministry of the Word. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1958.

A reflection on the nature and practice of problems in and from the pulpit.

Buttrick, David G. Homiletic, Moves and Structures. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.

One of the leading works in preaching which draws from the narrative tradition. The author confronts the issues which face preachers ranging from style, technique, contemporization and more.

Chartier, Myron R. Preaching as Communication. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981.

Dr. Chartier focuses primarily on the inter-personal aspects of preaching when discussing the nature of communication theory.

Corson, Richard. Stage Makeup. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1942.

A basic textbook on the development and application of theatrical makeup.

Cox, James W. Preaching - A Comprehensive Approach to the Design and Delivery of Sermons. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1985.

"Preaching" examines the nature of preaching and "the different ways in which the power of the Word of God comes to expression today." Of particular interest was the section of the preacher's individuality.

Craddock, Fred B. As One With Authority. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971.

One of Dr. Craddock's earlier pieces, which deals with how preachers can offer an alternative to what has been the traditional style of homiletics.

Craddock, Fred. B. Overhearing the Gospel. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1978.

Author proposes a style of preaching he calls "indirect communication" to overcome the blocks to effective communication.

Craddock, Fred. B. Preaching. Nashville: Abingdon, 1985.

Author's proposal on how to prepare and and deliver an effective sermon.

Duke, Robert W. The Sermon as God's Word. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980.

A review of what the author considers the five major theological traditions that have influenced the church's pulpit.

Gonzalez, Justo L., and Catherine G. Gonzalez. Liberation Preaching, the Pulpit and Oppressed. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980.

A brief review of liberation theology and the obstacles which impede a liberating interpretation of the Gospel.

Eslinger, Richard L. A New Hearing, Living Options in Homiletic Method. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987.

Contrasts the approach and technique to narrative homiletics as used by seven contemporary experts in this field. Includes examples of their sermons.

Hardin, Grady. The Leadership of Worship. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980.

A discussion and combination of theology and practical in the time, space and leadership considerations for worship.

Hayford, Jack W. Worship His Majesty. Waco: Word Books, 1987.

A perspective on why we do and should worship.

Hoefler, Richard Carl. Creative Preaching and Oral Writing. Lima: C.S.S. Publishing Co. 1978.

A discussion of the structure of the sermon and the use of the oral style of writing sermons.

Holland, DeWitte T. The Preaching Tradition. Nashville: Abingdon Press. 1980.

A short, concise survey of the ancient heritage and historical development of American preaching.

Howe, Reuel L. The Miracle of Dialogue. New York: Seabury Press, 1963.

An exploration into the resources and barriers in communication from a Christian perspective.

- Ingham, Rosemary and Covey, Elizabeth. The Costumer's Handbook. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1980.
A basic textbook on the history of theatrical costuming as well as directions and suggestions on how to create costuming.
- Jabusch, Willard F. The Person in the Pulpit. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980.
A consideration of the person in the pulpit. An analysis of the "good preacher."
- Jensen, Richard A. Telling the Story, Variety and Imagination in Preaching. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1980.
Contrasts the style and functions of didactic and story sermons, with illustrations of each.
- Lischer, Richard. A Theology of Preaching, the Dynamics of the Gospel. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981.
A consideration of how and why the two disciplines of preaching and theology necessarily interact.
- Lowery, Eugene L. The Homiletical Plot, The Sermon as Narrative Art Form. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1980.
An excellent introduction to narrative technique in the development of a narrative sermon.
- Lowery, Eugene L. Doing Time in the Pulpit. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985.
Dr. Lowery approaches preaching from a temporal perspective. His position is that story is the most effective device for accomplishing "event-in-time".
- Markquart, Edward F. Quest for Better Preaching, Resources for Renewal in the Pulpit. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1985.
Presents the preacher as "raconteur" of the Gospel. His style of presentation seems simplistically mechanical.
- O'Day, Gail R. The Word Disclosed: John's Story and Narrative Preaching. St. Louis: CBP Press, 1987.
A series of exegetical reflections on the Fourth Gospel texts for Year A of the lectionary. Dr. O'Day takes a particular stream of approach in searching for the narrative.
- Owens, Milton E. Jr., Outstanding Black Sermons, vol. 3. Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1982.
A collection of nine sermons by leading Black preachers in America.
- Rhoads, David, and Mutchie, Donald. Mark as Story, An Introduction to the narrative of a Gospel. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982.
A consideration of Mark as a narrative whole.

Stroup, George W. The Promise of Narrative Theology. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981.

A systematic theologian studies the characteristics of theology and narrative in an attempt to reconcile, or at least, understand, the concept of narrative theology.

Tooze, Ruth. Storytelling. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1959.

An introduction to storytelling, especially for those who tell stories to children. Includes a section on history and two sections on technique.

Wagley, Laurence A. "Preaching in Intimate Settings." Circuit Rider, Oct. 1986.

Presents narrative preaching as a way to recapture the intimate aspects of worship.

VIDEO RESOURCES

Lance, Belden C. Storytelling: The Enchantment of Theology. St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1982. Cassettes.

A series of tapes which instruct and illustrate the value and varied worth of narrative. Includes four tapes.

On Stage with Children: Storytelling; Art and Tradition, with Teresa Toscano. Parts 1 & 2. Distributed by: The Catholic Library Association, Haverford, PN, 1983. Videocassettes.

A good general introduction to storytelling. Includes workshop exercises for small groups.

"Stories Everywhere". Distributed by Adair Films, San Francisco, 1982. Video-cassette.

Presents the revival of storytelling by presenting examples of folk-style storytellers and contemporary storytellers.

Story Telling. Baltimore: Mass Media Ministries. 16 mm film.

A visual introduction to the technique of storytelling. Directed to educators who work with children.